

**Glamis Primary School
Angus Council
12 June 2007**

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1. Background

Glamis Primary School was inspected in February and March 2007 as part of a national sample of primary education. The inspection covered key aspects of the work of the school at all stages. It evaluated pupils' achievements, the effectiveness of the school, the environment for learning, the school's processes for self-evaluation and innovation, and its capacity for improvement. There was a particular focus on attainment in English language and mathematics.

HM Inspectors examined pupils' work and interviewed groups of pupils, including the pupil council, and staff. Members of the inspection team also met the acting chairperson of the School Board, representatives of the parent-teacher association (PTA) and a group of parents¹.

The school serves the village of Glamis and the surrounding rural area. An acting headteacher had been in post for four months. At the time of the inspection the roll was 72, including six children in the nursery class. The proportion of pupils who were entitled to free school meals was in line with the national average. Pupils' attendance was above the national average. The work of the nursery class was not included in this inspection.

2. Key strengths

HM Inspectors identified the following key strengths.

- The wide range of learning activities and visits experienced by pupils.
- The quality of pastoral care.
- Effective staff teamwork and relationships.
- Strong and beneficial partnerships with parents and the local community.

3. What are the views of parents, pupils and staff?

HM Inspectors analysed responses to questionnaires issued to all parents, P4 to P7 pupils, and to all staff. Information about the responses to the questionnaires appears in Appendix 2.

Parents who responded to the questionnaire, and those interviewed in the course of the inspection, were very satisfied with almost all aspects of their children's education. All of those who responded to the questionnaire thought that the school had a good reputation in the local community, that their children were treated fairly at school and

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

that the school was well led. Pupils were also very positive about the school. All reported that teachers explained things clearly and that they felt safe and well looked after. Teaching and support staff were very positive in their responses. All noted that they had good opportunities to be involved in decision-making processes and felt that the school was well led.

4. How good are learning, teaching and achievement?

Pupils' learning experiences and achievements

Overall, the curriculum was broad and balanced. There was a strong emphasis on encouraging pupils to undertake a wide range of activities and experiences, both in and out of school. Good use of visits and visitors helped develop further pupils' knowledge and understanding of aspects of the curriculum. Positive input from visiting teachers helped enhance pupils' learning experiences. Teachers had begun to develop worthwhile activities to foster appropriate skills in citizenship and enterprise education. Opportunities for pupils to develop and apply skills in information and communications technology (ICT) were well planned and organised. Teachers' planning and assessment approaches did not always ensure progressive learning experiences for all pupils. The quality of teaching was good. Most teachers made effective use of a wide range of approaches in their teaching. This included some highly effective use of ICT to engage and motivate pupils. Overall, teachers involved pupils actively in their learning. They shared learning outcomes effectively with pupils, particularly in mathematics and aspects of English language. Increasingly, they also encouraged pupils to review what they had learned. However, teachers did not always ensure that pupils were sufficiently clear on what they had to do to improve their learning further, for example in writing. Teachers' use of questioning was not consistently challenging. Homework was regular and appropriate.

The quality of pupils' learning was good, overall. Most pupils responded positively to the broad range of activities available to them and were motivated and hardworking in class. In P1/2, pupils worked well collaboratively during activities in mathematics. Pupils at P7 made very effective use of computers to create a presentation which explored similarities and differences between Victorian and modern day childhood. At P3/4, pupils had helped to establish agreed group rules for working together with peers. Most pupils in this class also made effective use of helpful techniques to support them in reflecting on their progress and learning. Across the stages, pupils were learning to reflect on their learning, and to set targets to assist them in making further progress. At times, a few pupils did not work consistently well without close supervision. The pace of learning did not always challenge all pupils.

The school had taken good steps to help pupils develop their wider achievements. The school had achieved silver Eco School status. Through involvement in the Eco Schools committee, pupils had contributed positively to the improvement of the school grounds. Pupils at all stages had helped design the planned adventure playground. They had also responded enthusiastically to learning about, for example, aspects of recycling. Pupils were learning to accept and exercise responsibilities, such as managing and organising the school tuck shop and acting as buddies to younger pupils. They benefited from participation in a number of interesting clubs and activities. Pupils in the chess club,

for example, were developing both an enjoyment of chess, and their levels of concentration, through regular lunchtime participation. The school choir had recently achieved success at a local Burns' festival. Across the school, pupils were developing positive attitudes to healthy eating and living. Those at P7 reported positively on the benefits gained from a range of activities as part of a recent residential experience.

English language

The overall quality of attainment in English language was adequate. Attainment levels had not improved significantly in recent years. Most pupils were achieving appropriate national levels of attainment in listening, talking, reading and writing. A few pupils at some stages were attaining these levels earlier than might normally be expected. Pupils who were experiencing difficulty in their class work were receiving appropriate support and were making steady progress. Most pupils listened well to instructions and spoke confidently with the teacher and other adults. A minority were not skilled at listening to others. Pupils' skills in group discussion required further development. Almost all pupils read fluently, often with very good expression. Pupils at P5, for example, made good use of punctuation to aid their expression. At P7, pupils talked confidently about favourite authors and features of the books they had read. Pupils wrote for a range of purposes and in an increasing range of styles. For a few pupils across the stages, their progress in writing was not consistently good.

Mathematics

In mathematics, the overall quality of attainment was adequate. In recent years, the school had not been successful in sustaining a high level of attainment. Most pupils were achieving appropriate levels of attainment. Almost all pupils at P2 were achieving these levels earlier than might normally be expected. However, these early gains were not maintained as pupils progressed through the school. Pupils who required additional support in aspects of mathematics were making appropriate progress. At all stages, pupils were able to interpret information from a range of graphs. Pupils at P6 and P7 made good use of computers to collate and present data using spreadsheets and databases. Most pupils carried out written calculations confidently in number, money and measure. Pupils' skills in calculating mentally were, at times, too variable. Across the school, pupils could identify and discuss the properties of two- and three-dimensional shapes appropriate to their level. By P7, pupils were able to identify and apply a variety of problem solving strategies.

5. How well are pupils' learning needs met?

Pupils' learning needs were adequately met. The acting headteacher worked closely with staff to support and advise them on how best to address pupils' learning needs. Most tasks set were well matched to the needs of pupils. Pupils had responded well to increased involvement in setting their own learning targets and recording their progress. However, across the stages, the pace of some lessons was not sufficiently rigorous to ensure appropriate challenge for all pupils. Working with staff, the support for learning teacher made good use of individualised educational programmes to help pupils progress in their learning. Support staff provided effective additional support for pupils with specific learning and behavioural needs. Pupils who found difficulty with coordination benefited

from effective input from an informal support team, including the active schools' coordinator. Overall, however, the progress of lower-attaining pupils was too uneven. Staff had developed positive links with a range of agencies to provide targeted support for pupils with additional support needs.

6. How good is the environment for learning?

Aspect	Comment
Pastoral care	<p>The overall quality of pastoral care was very good. All staff demonstrated concern for pupils' care and welfare. They knew pupils and their families well. Staff were trained appropriately in child protection procedures and the use of the school's approaches to anti-bullying. Pupils enjoyed being at school. They felt safe and well looked after. They reported that they were treated fairly and knew what to do if they had any concerns. The school actively promoted a healthy lifestyle through, for example, use of a healthy tuck shop and a wide range of sports and fitness activities. Effective arrangements were in place for pupils entering P1 and for the transfer of P7 pupils to Webster's High School.</p>
Quality of accommodation and facilities	<p>The quality of accommodation was very good. The school building provided an attractive environment for pupils. Arrangements for security were appropriate and access and facilities for those with a disability were very good. The school was very clean and the facilities were well maintained. Classrooms were bright and well furnished. Staff had made good use of space to create a well-used ICT suite. Displays of pupils' work and achievements were used effectively to create a stimulating environment for learning. Pupils benefited from a spacious playground, which they used for gardening, sports and games. School and education authority staff were reviewing bus parking arrangements to ensure pupils' safety in the playground at the end of the school day.</p>

Aspect	Comment
Climate and relationships, expectations and promoting achievement and equality	<p>The school provided an attractive and welcoming environment. Pupils and staff identified strongly with the school. Staff morale was high. Teachers were very committed to the school and had established sound relationships with pupils. Support, clerical and visiting staff made a positive contribution to the work of the school. Most pupils behaved well. At times, a minority of pupils did not show sufficient consideration for others. Staff used praise well to motivate and encourage pupils. Their expectations of pupils' attainment, however, were not yet consistently high. There was a strong sense of equality and fairness in the school. Pupils learned about a wide range of religious beliefs and practices. The school had not yet embedded its approaches to promoting an understanding of race equality and diversity through the curriculum. Regular assemblies, well supported by the local minister, provided appropriate opportunities for religious observance and for recognising pupils' achievement.</p>
Partnership with parents and the community	<p>The school had established very good links with parents and the community. Communication between the school and home was very effective. Parents received regular, informative newsletters which included reports by pupils of school activities. Staff shared information about environmental studies topics with parents and provided useful information on how they could support their child's learning in this area. Parents' evenings and pupil reports gave parents very good information about pupils' progress in learning. The school consulted parents appropriately on sensitive health issues. The School Board and the PTA supported the school well, including securing lottery funding for the planned adventure playground. Parents assisted the school in a range of ways, including help with school outings, and with lunchtime and after-school activities. Pupils took part in a wide range of community events and members of the community participated in school activities.</p>

7. Leading and improving the school

Appendix 1 provides HM Inspectors' overall evaluation of the work of the school.

Glamis Primary School provided an attractive and caring environment in which pupils were happy and respected. Approaches to learning and teaching were effective. Pupils responded well to good opportunities to achieve in a range of areas. Staff worked well

as a team. However, a significant minority of pupils were capable of attaining more in aspects of English language and mathematics. The pace at which pupils progressed in their learning was not consistently challenging for all pupils.

In her short time in post, the acting headteacher had established positive and constructive relationships with the school community. Working closely with the staff team, she had successfully focused on appropriate short-term priorities to ensure the stability and continued development of the school. She supported staff and pupils well and had successfully affirmed and encouraged effective practice in important aspects of learning and teaching. She was now well placed to ensure that teachers addressed the need to provide greater challenge for pupils in their learning. Working with staff, the acting headteacher had strengthened aspects of quality assurance and self-evaluation. She provided staff with clear, useful feedback on the quality of their plans. She had also developed procedures for engaging with staff on the quality of pupils' class work. Feedback on learning and teaching was purposeful and constructive. These approaches had begun to impact positively on the quality and consistency of pupils' experiences and learning. Overall, the school's approaches to self-evaluation were not yet sufficiently rigorous. Staff use of the education authority's monitoring and tracking system was not consistently effective in supporting pupils' progress. With the continued effective support of the education authority, the school was well placed to ensure further improvement.

Main points for action

The school and education authority should take action to ensure an appropriate level of pace and challenge in pupils' learning.

In doing so they should take account of the need to:

- improve attainment;
- use assessment information more effectively to inform learning and teaching;
- increase the level of pace and challenge for some pupils; and
- build on recent developments in self-evaluation to ensure continued improvement in outcomes for pupils.

What happens next?

The school and the education authority have been asked to prepare an action plan indicating how they will address the main findings of the report, and to share that plan with parents. Within two years of the publication of this report parents will be informed about the progress made by the school.

Peter McNaughton
HM Inspector

12 June 2007

Appendix 1 Indicators of quality

The sections in the table below follow the order in this report. You can find the main comments made about each of the quality indicators in those sections. However, aspects of some quality indicators are relevant to other sections of the report and may also be mentioned in those other sections.

How good are learning, teaching and achievement?	
Structure of the curriculum	good
The teaching process	good
Pupils' learning experiences	good
Pupils' attainment in English language	adequate
Pupils' attainment in mathematics	adequate

How well are pupils' learning needs met?	
Meeting pupils' needs	adequate

How good is the environment for learning?	
Pastoral care	very good
Accommodation and facilities	very good
Climate and relationships	good
Expectations and promoting achievement	good
Equality and fairness	good
Partnership with parents, the School Board, and the community	very good

Leading and improving the school	
Leadership across the school	good
Self-evaluation	adequate

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
adequate	strengths just outweigh weaknesses
weak	important weaknesses
unsatisfactory	major weaknesses

Appendix 2 Summary of questionnaire responses

Important features of responses from the various groups which received questionnaires are listed below.

<p>What parents thought the school did well</p>	<p>What parents think the school could do better</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school had a good reputation in the local community. • Staff made them feel welcome in the school. • The school consulted them well on decisions which affected their children. • The school was well led. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There were no significant issues.
<p>What pupils thought the school did well</p>	<p>What pupils think the school could do better</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers explained things clearly and helped them when they were stuck. • They were treated fairly in school. • They had a say in deciding how to make the school better. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There were no significant issues.
<p>What staff thought the school did well</p>	<p>What staff think the school could do better</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff were very positive about all aspects of school life. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There were no significant issues.

How can you contact us?

If you would like an additional copy of this report

Copies of this report have been sent to the headteacher and school staff, the Director of Education, local councillors and appropriate Members of the Scottish Parliament. Subject to availability, further copies may be obtained free of charge from HM Inspectorate of Education, Greyfriars House, Gallowgate, Aberdeen AB10 1LQ or by telephoning 01224 642544. Copies are also available on our website www.hmie.gov.uk.

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If you are not satisfied with the action we have taken at the end of our complaints procedure, you can raise your complaint with the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO). The SPSO is fully independent and has powers to investigate complaints about Government departments and agencies. You should write to the SPSO, Freeport EH641, Edinburgh EH3 0BR. You can also telephone 0800 377 7330, fax 0800 377 7331 or e-mail: ask@spso.org.uk. More information about the Ombudsman's office can be obtained from the website: www.spso.org.uk.

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