



**King's Meadow Primary  
School  
Haddington  
East Lothian Council  
16 June 2009**

This report tells you about the quality of education at the school<sup>1</sup>. 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 parents<sup>2</sup> 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](http://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.

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

<sup>2</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**

King's Meadow Primary School is a non-denominational school for children from P4 to P7. It serves the town of Haddington. The roll was 371 when the inspection was carried out in April 2009. Children's attendance was in line with the national average in 2007/2008

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

- Enthusiastic and well motivated children.
- High levels of attainment and achievement.
- The well-organised curriculum, particularly the approach to education for citizenship.
- The high degree of staff commitment towards improving the school.
- The leadership of the headteacher and the management team towards improving the work of the school.

## **3. Examples of good practice**

- Opportunities for children to take leadership roles.
- The approach to education for global citizenship.
- The use of netbook computers to enhance children's learning.

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

### **Learning and achievement**

Children at all stages are highly motivated, enthusiastic and keen to learn. They are making good progress in classwork and are confident in tackling new tasks, explaining their work and discussing how they might improve. Most concentrate well. They are able to work on their own and to learn from each other through discussion. They have sound knowledge and understanding of their classwork, for example in their history, health and religious and moral education topics. The

quality of their art work is exceptionally high. Children at P5 are making very effective use of netbook computers to develop their skills in accessing and using information from the internet. Staff are very successful in extending children's personal and social development through out-of-class activities, including sport and music. As a result, many are benefiting from the wide range of opportunities to exercise leadership skills as prefects, house captains and junior road safety officers. They are developing a strong sense of responsibility for others, through the work of the *Green Team* eco-group and the health promoting group. The school has achieved an Eco-School Scotland Green Flag and Health Promoting School status. The school parliament draws together the contributions of the various groups and gives children throughout the school experience of citizenship in practice. Over the last few years, the school has maintained high standards of attainment in reading, writing and mathematics. Most children are making very good progress and attaining well. In English language, all children respond well to questions and express their views and opinions clearly and with confidence. They read fluently and accurately and can discuss books they have read. The quality of their writing has improved significantly as a result of the school's efforts to improve how writing is taught. Most now write well for a range of purposes and are developing the capacity to organise their ideas clearly. They are benefiting from increased opportunities to link writing activities to other areas of the curriculum, such as health education and history. In mathematics, most children are confident in mental and written calculations and in using money and measurement. By P5, they can give their height and weight confidently in metric measurements. By P7, they can interpret information from a range of graphs and charts. Across the school, children have a sound understanding of how to solve problems in a range of situations and can explain the strategies they are using.

## **Curriculum and meeting learning needs**

The school provides children with a well-organised, broad and balanced curriculum. The emphasis on international education, education for enterprise and education for citizenship is particularly strong. Teachers work well together to plan suitable programmes in

English language and mathematics. They are developing a shared approach to teaching literacy and numeracy through opportunities for children to apply their skills in different situations. Children have used these skills successfully to help plan charity and community activities and successful residential experiences. Children benefit from well-planned activities in art, drama, music and physical education. Staff use information and communications technology very effectively to support children's learning. Based on its existing good practice and the current level of staff awareness, the school is very well placed to continue implementing *Curriculum for Excellence*.

Throughout the school, staff meet the learning needs of most children well. Staff know children as individuals and plan carefully to prepare materials and tasks to meet the range of needs. They organise classes in mathematics to reflect the pace of children's progress, although additional support and a more individualised approach is required for some children. Across the curriculum, higher-achieving children are capable of making progress at a faster pace. They would benefit from more open-ended activities which required them to think for themselves. Children are involved in setting targets for themselves. Most are aware of their progress and how they can improve their learning. Support for learning teachers and assistants provide helpful support for children in class and in the support base. There are clear arrangements, planned with the education authority, to provide additional support for some children and to review regularly the range of support needed. Nevertheless, some with particular social needs would benefit from planned programmes to provide life skills and social skills. There are well-developed arrangements to support children going on to secondary school. Staff have also worked well with their colleagues in the local infant school to improve support for children coming into P4.

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

Staff work well with others to support children's learning. The school has a range of constructive links with other community organisations. These include the John Muir Trust, sports clubs, the local eco-group

and gardening club, a local bank, the pipe and drumming society and the Tyne Park Adult Learning Centre. In each case, children's learning is usefully extended. The school has effective links with other professionals in supporting children with particular needs, including educational psychology, occupational therapy and speech and language support. There are good links with other schools, including the local infant school and secondary school. Shared sessions for professional development are increasing teachers' confidence and the momentum for improvement. The school, is well supported by the Parent Council and the parent-teachers association. Parents overall are very supportive of the school and value its openness in seeking their views through surveys. Regular newsletters provide parents with useful information about the curriculum, school events and the wide range of out-of-class activities. The school website is potentially informative but needs further updating. Parents help with the library and other school activities. There is a clear education authority complaints procedure used by the school. The headteacher has recognised the need to improve the tone and clarity of some communications with parents and to ensure that the resolution of all complaints is recorded.

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

Children are proud of the school and contribute to it in many ways such as the school parliament, the pupil council, the eco-group and the health group. They take their responsibilities seriously and are developing a sense of responsibility towards others and to the school community as a whole. Staff teamwork is strong. Staff are highly committed to improving children's learning. Class teachers work closely with senior staff. Surveys are used to gather the views of children, parents and teachers on important aspects of school life and to review procedures. There are well established arrangements for the senior management team and all teachers to observe the quality of teaching and to offer constructive feedback. As a result, a policy for ensuring excellence in teaching has been agreed and lesson planning throughout the school is consistent and effective. There are rigorous arrangements to review teachers' plans and to track children's

progress and attainment. The information gathered has been used to bring about clear improvements in aspects of children's attainment identified as priorities, for example through revised approaches to the teaching of writing. The school is now well placed, as part of its drive to implement *Curriculum for Excellence*, to review how well teaching approaches are encouraging children's capacity to think independently and creatively.

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

The school has a strong ethos based on high staff expectations of behaviour and work. Children work hard and behave well in class and around the school. They enjoy coming to school and feel safe and well looked after. Prefects take responsibility for helping younger children in the playground. Most children feel that the school is improving their confidence and will deal effectively with things that are worrying them, including any instances of bullying. Better arrangements for allowing children to express their worries confidentially are still required. Anti-bullying procedures are clear and well organised, as is the school's race equality policy. Relationships between teachers and children are very positive. Most feel that teachers treat them fairly and with respect. Staff know about the school's child protection arrangements and what to do to keep children safe and well. Pupils are involved in setting the tone of the school through performances at assemblies and the work of the school parliament. Assemblies are used well to emphasise positive behaviour and recognise achievement. Current arrangements for religious observance need to be improved. Staff use well-planned displays to raise expectations and promote a positive attitude to learning. The school is fully accessible to wheelchair users and those with restricted mobility.

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

The headteacher provides the school with a clear sense of direction, through a high degree of personal commitment to improvement and the maintenance of high standards. He is very well supported by the depute headteacher and principal teachers, who form an effective

team. Appropriate priorities for development have been identified by the senior staff, although more attention is now needed to increasing the degree of challenge for higher attaining children. Staff morale is high. Teachers work very hard to develop their own skills and experience. Many take responsibility in leading initiatives and sharing examples of good practice. The school has a wide range of approaches towards for reviewing the quality of its work. It is well placed to continue developing the curriculum and improving the arrangements for meeting the needs of all children.

## **9. What happens next?**

As a result of the very good quality of education provided by the school, we will make no further visits following 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.

- Continue the implementation of *Curriculum for Excellence*, with particular attention to encouraging creativity and independent thinking.
- Increase the pace of learning and degree of challenge across the curriculum for higher-attaining children.
- Provide additional support for children who require better social skills and greater confidence.
- Improve arrangements for religious observance.

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 King's Meadow Primary School.

<b>Improvements in performance</b>	<b>very good</b>
<b>Learners' experiences</b>	<b>good</b>
<b>Meeting learning needs</b>	<b>good</b>

We also evaluated the following aspects of the work of the school.

<b>The curriculum</b>	<b>very good</b>
<b>Improvement through self-evaluation</b>	<b>very good</b>

**HM Inspector:** Lachlan MacCallum  
16 June 2009

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Our complaints procedure is available from our website [www.hmie.gov.uk](http://www.hmie.gov.uk) or alternatively you can write to our Complaints Manager, at the address above or by telephoning 01506 600259.

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 SPSO, Freepost EH641, Edinburgh EH3 0BR. You can also telephone 0800 377 7330, fax 0800 377 7331 or e-mail: [ask@spsso.org.uk](mailto:ask@spsso.org.uk). More information about the Ombudsman's office can be obtained from the website at [www.spsso.org.uk](http://www.spsso.org.uk).

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