



**Anderson's Primary School
Forres
The Moray Council
25 August 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

Anderson's Primary School is a non-denominational school. It serves Forres east and outlying areas. The roll was 210 when the inspection was carried out in June 2009. Children's attendance was in line with the national average in 2007/2008.

2. Particular strengths of the school

- Children's positive attitudes to learning and caring for one another.
- Children's learning experiences and achievements.
- Staff approach to meeting children's learning needs.
- Very strong leadership for learning provided by the headteacher.
- Effective approaches to self-evaluation.

3. Example of good practice

- The effectiveness of the 'sharing and development group' in engaging staff in innovative learning and teaching approaches.

4. How well do children learn and achieve?

Learning and achievement

Children are enthusiastic, hard working and strive to do their best. They enjoy school and feel that their views matter. They learn well in tasks which encourage them to think for themselves and to explain their thinking to others. Children understand the purposes of lessons and their learning targets. Staff need to ensure that children use feedback on their performance to improve their work.

Across the school, children's skills in using information and communications technology are developing very well.

Children benefit from clubs and committees which give them good opportunities to work with others and to become responsible citizens. The democratic pupil council members represent their classmates responsibly. All children contribute as active citizens by organising and taking part in regular charity events. Children have positive attitudes to healthy lifestyles. They produce accomplished art and craft work and achieve well in music and physical education.

In recent years, standards of attainment in English language and mathematics have remained high. Most children achieve appropriate national levels. A number of children at all stages are achieving these levels in reading and mathematics earlier than would normally be expected. In English language, children's skills in listening and talking are well developed. Children enjoy reading and are beginning to use their literacy skills across the curriculum. Their attainment in writing is improving. In mathematics, children are confident in mental and written calculations, and can use computers to make databases and graphs. At all stages, children discuss different ways of solving problems and use these skills across the curriculum. Children enjoy learning through practical activities.

Curriculum and meeting learning needs

Across the school, the curriculum is broad and balanced. Staff have made a good start to implementing the national initiative *Curriculum for Excellence*. They have increased children's interest in topics by encouraging them to select the focus of their learning. The school provides two hours of good quality physical education each week for children. Enterprise activities give children good opportunities to talk to adults and present information to others. Children at P1 and P7 are working together to produce an imaginative 'Welcome to Anderson's' DVD. Activities and approaches used in the new playroom help children to progress smoothly from local nurseries into P1. Staff are continuing to develop learning through play at the early stages to support children to learn new skills. Homework is regular at all stages but children find the activities less enjoyable than class work.

The school now needs to ensure that in all areas of the curriculum, learning experiences develop children's skills in literacy and numeracy effectively.

Across the school, staff meet children's learning needs well. Classroom tasks and activities are well matched to the needs and interests of all children. Calm and well-structured classroom routines help children manage their behaviour successfully. Provision for higher achieving children extends their learning particularly well in mathematics. The headteacher works closely with staff to identify promptly children in need of additional support or challenge. The support for learning teacher works well with individuals and groups. Regular meetings take place to review targets for children's learning and help to ensure that children make good progress. During lessons, children receive valuable help from classroom support staff.

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

Parents are very satisfied with almost all aspects of the life and work of the school. They are particularly pleased with the information they receive about what their children are learning in school, including education about sensitive health issues. Staff ensure that parents are well informed about their children's progress, through reports and parents' nights. The headteacher deals promptly and effectively with any complaints or concerns raised by parents. Staff regularly explain new approaches, showcase children's work, and seek parents' views about the school. The school has fostered close and productive partnerships with other professionals, including psychological and health services, which support children's learning. Members of the local community shared their own skills with children in the successful 'Caledonian Capers' event. The local community police teach children about physical, social and emotional health, and safety. Links with the local airbase have had a positive influence on children's learning and welfare. Local businesses are regularly involved in enterprise and careers events including a business seminar which gave older children

the opportunity to interview employers. Children are well supported in their move from pre-school to P1 and from P7 to Forres Academy. Staff use their links with the local authority and other schools to share ideas which improve learning and teaching.

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

The headteacher has consulted staff, parents, children and the wider school community on what makes an excellent school. Their views have contributed to an ambitious vision which everyone is helping to realise. The key aim of 'promoting respect and success for everyone through fun, exciting and active learning' can be seen in practice around the school. Children feel valued and involved in improving their school. Pupil council members contribute a section to the school's improvement plan and have taken this responsibility very seriously. Other children take on a range of roles as young leaders in classrooms, the library, the playground, the computer room and the tuck shop. Most teachers seek children's views on their learning. Everyone in the school feels valued. Staff are reflective and regularly discuss together how they can develop their teaching skills further. The headteacher seeks and takes account of feedback from teachers, parents and children. Senior managers track each child's performance closely. They observe lessons, monitor children's work and teachers' plans and give teachers helpful support and advice. The school improvement plan has helped to improve children's learning and achievement.

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

The school has a happy and welcoming atmosphere. Staff place a strong emphasis on promoting and celebrating children's wider achievements. Wall displays showcase children's art, craft and class work. Staff also take opportunities to display children's work around the community, including through contributions to the local library.

Children and staff are rightly proud of their school, its reputation and its achievements. Relationships among children and staff are very positive and there is a strong sense of mutual respect. Children respond well to the school's 'superstars' motivation programme and have high expectations of their own and one another's behaviour. Overall, staff have high expectations of children's work, behaviour and attendance. Children have appropriate opportunities to take part in religious observance, for example through assemblies. There they develop their understanding of different cultures as well as learning about their rights and responsibilities. Staff are caring and nurturing and are aware of the school's child protection procedures. They give good attention to children's health, safety and happiness.

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

The headteacher has a very clear sense of direction. She has implemented rigorous approaches to self-evaluation and has focused on leading improvements in children's learning experiences. She is highly respected by children, staff and parents, and encourages her staff to be innovative and ambitious. The senior management team provide the headteacher with good support. All staff are enthusiastic about helping to improve the school further, and are leading developments which have had a very positive impact on children's learning. The school is very well placed to continue to improve.

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 to raise attainment in writing.
- Increase opportunities for children to develop their literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum.
- Improve homework tasks to reflect the active approaches used in class.

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 Anderson's Primary School.

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

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

The curriculum	very good
Improvement through self-evaluation	very good

HM Inspector: Jacqueline Sinclair
25 August 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