



**Aviemore Primary School
and Nursery Class
The Highland Council
9 March 2010**

HM Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) inspects schools in order to let parents¹, children and the local community know whether their school² provides a good education. Inspectors also discuss with school staff how they can improve the quality of education.

At the beginning of the inspection, we ask the headteacher and staff about the strengths of the school, what needs to improve, and how they know. We use the information they give us to help us plan what we are going to look at. During the inspection, we go into classes and join other activities in which children are involved. We also gather the views of children, parents, staff and members of the local community. We find their views very helpful and use them together with the other information we have collected to arrive at our view of the quality of education.

This report tells you what we found during the inspection and the quality of education in the school. We describe how well children are doing, how good the school is at helping them to learn and how well it cares for them. We comment on how well staff, parents and children work together and how they go about improving the school. We also comment on how well the school works with other groups in the community, including services which support children. Finally, we focus on how well the school is led and how staff help the school achieve its 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 from children, parents and staff. We will not provide questionnaire analyses where the numbers of returns are so small that they could identify individuals.

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

² The term 'school' includes the nursery class or classes where appropriate.

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1. The school

Aviemore Primary School is a non-denominational school with a nursery class. It serves the village of Aviemore and the surrounding area. The roll was 266, including 26 in the nursery, when the inspection was carried out in January 2010. A small number of children with additional support needs of a severe and profound nature were in the Rainbow Class and within the primary classes. Children's attendance was in line with the national average in 2007/2008.

2. Particular strengths of the school

- Enthusiastic, well-behaved and well-motivated learners.
- The quality of provision for children with severe and complex needs in the Rainbow Class, and support for learning across the school.
- The willingness of all staff to take additional responsibilities to improve the school.
- The quality of children's learning experiences in the nursery.

3. How well do children learn and achieve?

Learning and achievement

Across the school, almost all children are enthusiastic about learning. Children in the nursery class are happy and settled in their routines. They persevere well in their chosen activities and are becoming increasingly confident and independent in their learning. Children in the nursery speak confidently to adults and share their ideas with others during play. Children in the primary classes give their views confidently about their work and can discuss what they have learned from their lessons. Most are clear about how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve their writing. Children, particularly at P7, work together very well to build each others' confidence and to achieve success. Children in the Rainbow Class enjoy very positive learning experiences. They benefit from the variety of activities and enjoy helping with organising resources. They respond well to the praise that staff give them when they make a positive contribution. Across the school children with severe and complex needs, additional to those in the Rainbow Class, learn and achieve well. They show clear progress in developing confidence, knowledge and skills and are developing aspects of independence.

All children take part eagerly in a range of reading activities. For example, the 'Reading Challenge' is well supported by a classroom assistant and parents. As a result of these activities, children are now reading more frequently and from a wider range of books. Children in the nursery express their ideas well when painting, creating pictures and models, playing imaginatively and making music. Children's skills are developing well through early science investigations such as exploring the properties of water and ice. Children in the primary classes experience success and apply their investigative skills well in topic activities. Many children demonstrate responsible citizenship skills and contribute effectively to the school. These include Eco-Schools Scotland work, house captains and prefects, pupil council and snack attack activities. Almost all children feel safe and included. They are becoming increasingly aware of how to keep themselves fit and healthy. Older children work together well helping younger children in the dining hall.

All children in the nursery class are making very good progress in their development and learning. They enjoy listening to stories and respond well to instructions from adults. All can recognise their name in print and confidently make marks in early writing activities. They are enthusiastic about using numbers and are keen to count and identify numbers during play. In the primary classes, most children attain appropriate national levels in reading and mathematics and a majority do so in writing. In recent years, standards of attainment in these key areas have improved. Most children are making good progress in listening, talking, reading and mathematics and satisfactory progress in writing. In English language, almost all children listen attentively in class discussions and respond well to teachers' instructions. Most children can discuss and share their ideas well in groups. They talk confidently about their interests and the books they are reading. Children's research skills using a range of resources such as Internet websites are less well developed. High-achieving children are not independent or creative enough in their writing. In mathematics, most children are accurate and confident in mental and written calculations. Their written work is of a high standard, particularly at P6 and P7. Across the school, children can draw and interpret a range of graphs

and tables well. Most have a good understanding of shape and angles. They are able to solve mathematical problems well together using a range of strategies with confidence. Children are not skilled enough in using information and communications technology (ICT) to support their learning.

Curriculum and meeting learning needs

Staff in the nursery plan a stimulating range of activities that are based on children's interests. These provide enjoyment, challenge and choice for almost all children. Play activities are very well supported by staff. Children respond well to opportunities to be creative through art and craft and music activities. In the primary classes, staff are at the very early stages of developing the curriculum in line with *Curriculum for Excellence*. They need to help children apply their literacy and numeracy skills across different aspects of the curriculum. Children at the early stages do not yet have well-planned, purposeful opportunities to learn through play. Teachers are improving children's classroom experiences, particularly through their topic work. They are developing children's personal and social skills well, for example through the 'Resilient Kids' programme for P3 children. The 'Seasons for Growth' programme is developing the confidence and social skills of P7 children successfully as they prepare for secondary education. Staff are not yet providing two hours of high-quality physical education each week for all children. Children need more opportunities to use ICT to support their learning. Staff in the Rainbow Class provide well-planned and stimulating individual learning programmes that progressively develop children's skills and independence.

Staff meet children's learning needs well. Staff in the nursery class know children well and are sensitive to their individual circumstances. They identify and plan next steps in learning successfully. Staff need to provide greater challenge for a few children. In the primary classes, most tasks and activities are well matched to children's needs. Staff have begun to take good account of children's interests and ideas when planning activities. They are providing more opportunities for children to make choices in their own learning. The rate of learning in

writing is too slow for some children. Teachers give helpful explanations and share the purposes of lessons with children. Support for learning teachers and staff provide well-judged support to identify and meet well the needs of children who have difficulties with their learning. Their contribution has a very positive impact on children's progress. Varied homework encourages children to learn more.

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

The Parent Council supports the school well through many fundraising and social events. It is keen to develop further links. Parents attend the popular school performances and help with outings. They are involved in supporting children's learning through the 'Reading Challenge'. Staff have very effective partnerships with a wide range of external organisations. The school provides parents with helpful progress reports and information, for example on sensitive health issues. The school has appropriate arrangements for dealing with concerns or complaints. Staff do not communicate well enough with parents about the curriculum. They need to find ways to encourage parents and members of the local community to be more actively involved in their children's learning. Staff prepare children well for their transfer from nursery to primary. Children are particularly well supported for their transfer from P7 to Kingussie High School.

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

Children are keen to take responsibilities. Many are developing leadership skills by taking part in the pupil council or action groups. They are learning to make decisions on how they can help to improve the school. The pupil council was responsible for improving the house points system. In class, children are being given more of a say in how and what they learn, for example in planning their topic work. Staff are keen to improve the school. They have taken on key areas of

responsibility and leadership. Individually, their work has led to improvements in children's learning experiences. Staff are now beginning to work together as a team to take forward developments. These include improving staff and children's ICT skills and involving parents in the work of the school. The headteacher needs to support and encourage stronger teamwork. The school uses self-evaluation well to help inform improvements. Staff are not yet using information about children's learning to track some children's progress, particularly in writing, effectively enough.

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

Almost all children are well motivated. They behave well in classes and around the school. Children are proud of their school. They feel safe and confident that staff will deal effectively with any incidents of bullying. Almost all staff have positive relationships with children. Staff are committed to the wellbeing and support of all children and are knowledgeable about child protection procedures. They are mostly successful in promoting equality and fairness by including all children in all school activities. Children's achievements need to be celebrated more around the school and in the community. Staff encourage children to work hard and children respond well. Some staff do not have high enough expectations of what a few children can achieve in their learning. The school has achieved an Eco-Schools Scotland silver award. Children have regular opportunities for religious observance.

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

The headteacher has successfully involved children, parents and staff in developing the school's aims. Under her leadership and direction, children's attainment has improved. The depute headteacher, principal teacher and support for learning teacher provide strong support to staff and children. Staff in the nursery work very well as a team to provide effective learning for children. In the primary classes,

many staff are using their individual skills well to lead aspects of school improvement. The expertise and achievements of some staff are not always valued and recognised by the headteacher. Working together, the headteacher, other senior managers and staff now need to improve teamwork to further improve the school.

8. What happens next?

We are confident that, with support from the education authority, the school will be able to make the necessary improvements in light of the inspection findings. As a result, we will make no more visits in connection with this inspection. The school and the education authority will inform parents about the school's progress in improving the quality of education.

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

- Improve children's attainment in writing.
- Develop the curriculum in line with *Curriculum for Excellence*, including learning through play at the early stages.
- Develop staff teamwork and leadership for learning across the school.
- Improve communication with parents.

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 Aviemore Primary School and Nursery Class.

Primary school

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

Nursery class

Improvements in performance	good
Children's experiences	very good
Meeting learning needs	good

We also evaluated the following aspects of the work of the school and nursery class.

The curriculum	satisfactory
Improvement through self-evaluation	satisfactory

HM Inspector: June Graham
9 March 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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Text phone users can contact us on 01506 600 236. This is a service for deaf users. Please do not use this number for voice calls as the line will not connect you to a member of staff.

You can find our complaints procedure on our website www.hmie.gov.uk or alternatively you can contact our Complaints Manager, at the address above or by telephoning 01506 600259.

Where the school has a nursery class, you can contact the Complaints Coordinator, Headquarters, Care Commission, Compass House, Riverside Drive, Dundee DD1 4NY, telephone 0845 603 0890.

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