



**Broadford Primary School
and Nursery Class
The Highland 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

Broadford Primary School is a non-denominational school with two nursery classes. It serves the village of Broadford and the surrounding area on the island of Skye. When the inspection was carried out in January 2009, the roll was 131, including 40 children in Gaelic-medium classes, five in the English-medium nursery and 16 in the Gaelic-medium nursery. Children's attendance was below the national average in 2006/2007.

Evaluations in this report, except where otherwise stated, apply equally to the Gaelic-medium and English-medium primary and nursery classes.

2. Particular strengths of the school

- High quality nursery provision.
- Inclusion of children with additional support needs at all stages.
- Positive relationships between staff and children.
- Partnership working with the local community to support children's learning.
- Children's achievements as responsible citizens and effective contributors.

3. Examples of good practice

- Involving parents in improving children's reading.
- Working with partners to improve the school's outdoor environment.

4. How well do children learn and achieve?

Learning and achievement

Children in both nursery classes are making very good progress. They are developing their independence well through choosing activities from the wide range on offer. They talk confidently and enthusiastically about their learning. Almost all can write their own name and enjoy activities at the writing table. Those learning through

Gaelic-medium are developing their understanding of the language well. They sing songs in Gaelic and respond appropriately to adults talking to them in Gaelic. In both classes, most children count well. They can sort and match objects by size, shape and colour. All children are increasing their knowledge of weather changes and the seasons through a variety of well planned outdoor activities, including growing vegetables. They use digital cameras to record their own progress and talk about their learning.

In the primary classes, children's progress in English language is good in reading and satisfactory in listening, talking and writing. In recent years, children's attainment in reading and writing has decreased. The school has taken some steps which are beginning to improve this. Through the *Highland Literacy Project*, staff successfully introduced new approaches to reading. Almost all children now enjoy reading and most are making good progress. Most children are developing effectively their skills in writing for different purposes. In P4 to P7 classes, most children know how to improve their writing through careful planning and target setting. More consistently effective approaches are needed across all classes to ensure that all children make appropriate progress in writing. Children listen attentively to their teachers and share their ideas confidently. Children's progress in mathematics is satisfactory. They have a good understanding of shape and graphs and are developing skills in information and communications technology (ICT) to support their learning. Most children apply their numeracy skills well across the curriculum. However, by P7 there are some gaps in children's learning in mathematics. For example, they need more opportunities to develop independence in their approaches to problem solving. Children at the early stages are increasing their understanding of themselves and of each other. They are making appropriate choices about how and what they learn in environmental studies. Across the school children produce high quality art work. They work together very well on enterprise projects and charity fundraising. Many children regularly experience success and increased self esteem through sport, music, drama or dance activities run by the school or in the local community.

Gaelic-medium

Children in the Gaelic-medium primary classes are making satisfactory progress in reading and writing. Their progress in listening and talking is good. At the early stages children are progressing well in reading and writing, listening and talking. At P4 to P7, children's progress in reading and writing is too slow. Too many children in these classes lack fluency in their reading and are not able to write at length. At the upper stages, most children can confidently talk about their favourite authors and books they have read. They are beginning to understand how to improve their written work for example, by using ICT.

Curriculum and meeting learning needs

Children in both nursery classes experience a wide range of stimulating indoor and outdoor activities. Staff recognise the need to involve children in decisions about their learning. They provide many opportunities for children to learn together through play activities. Children enjoy painting and discovering more about the properties of sand and water. They use computers confidently. In the primary classes, teachers plan learning, such as writing letters to pen pals in Glasgow, which children enjoy and find relevant. Children's literacy skills are being developed well across the curriculum. Children are increasing their understanding of the world of work and developing important skills for their future lives. They visit local shops to buy ingredients for cookery and local employers regularly share their expertise during visits to classes. A few teachers effectively plan activities which encourage children to link their learning in different areas of the curriculum. There is scope to extend this to all classes. All children are learning about the importance of healthy and active lifestyles through twice weekly physical education lessons, regular swimming and fitness events. Staff make effective use of the local environment to develop children's awareness of environmental issues. Visiting teachers and volunteers contribute a great deal to children's learning in the expressive arts, French and physical education.

Staff in the nursery know the children well and are sensitive to their needs. They make effective use of resources to plan learning activities which meet the needs of all children very well. In the primary classes, staff encourage children to take responsibility for their learning in most lessons. Most use questioning effectively to develop children's thinking. Homework is well planned. In too many lessons the pace is too slow, particularly for higher attaining children. Class teachers need to develop a wider range of tasks and activities to meet the children's varying needs. In the English-medium classes, support for learning staff provide very good support to individuals and groups. Across the school, children with additional support needs are making good progress towards their targets for learning and personal development. Staff should involve these children in reviewing their targets.

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

Staff have developed very effective links with a wide range of other organisations to ensure that children are well supported. They readily seek and act on advice from other professionals including the speech therapist and educational psychologist. Many parents, local businesses and service organisations willingly provide time and resources to enhance children's learning. A good example of this support is the way in which everyone worked together to create the wild-life garden and outdoor play areas. Parents are very positive about the work of the nursery and the primary classes. They receive regular informative newsletters and know that they can approach staff if they have any concerns. Nursery staff keep parents well informed about their children's progress. A few parents feel that the primary school could be better at explaining how well their children are doing. Good arrangements are in place for supporting children as they move from nursery to P1 and from P7 to Portree High School. The school responds to complaints quickly and effectively.

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

All children respond very well to the many opportunities for them to take responsibility. In the nursery classes, children share in the preparation of snacks and organising resources. They help each other. Primary children contribute effectively, for example, through the pupil council and the eco committee and by acting as buddies to younger children. The school is rightly proud of its Eco-Schools Scotland Green Flag and children are working hard to achieve a second one. Children take their responsibilities for the environment very seriously. Those in the primary classes need to be more involved in decisions about how they learn across the curriculum. A few would like more involvement in discussions about how to improve the school. Staff and children are enthusiastic about their success in raising money for charities. They work well as a community. All staff take responsibility for an aspect of school improvement. Most are good at evaluating their work in ways which help them to improve the quality of teaching and learning.

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

Across the school relationships between staff and children are based on mutual respect. Almost all children are very well behaved and talk about their school with pride. They feel that the school treats them fairly and deals effectively with any incidents of bullying. Staff are very caring. They are well informed about all aspects of safeguarding children and deal with their concerns sensitively. The school encourages children to achieve widely. Primary staff need to increase their expectations for children's attainment in language and mathematics and ensure that all children make appropriate progress. Their achievements in and out-of-school are often recognised and rewarded by class teachers and during assemblies. The school has established some appropriate approaches to celebrating success. There is scope to further extend these. Local chaplains support the school to provide regular opportunities for religious observance which

develop children's understanding of their shared values. Across the school, children enjoy exploring new and healthier options during snack and lunch times. They are well informed about how to keep safe and healthy. Children are increasing well their understanding of different religions and cultures. The school needs to extend this learning to ensure a good understanding of other equality and diversity issues.

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

The school has established clear aims which have been shared with parents and children. Staff are committed to maximising the potential of all children. The headteacher is highly regarded in the school community and has provided stable leadership over many years. His commitment to partnership working with the local community has brought about many significant improvements in the school environment. He supports staff well and challenges them to continually improve their work. Approaches to monitoring the work of the school give him a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. Together with staff, he needs to use this information better to set appropriate targets for school improvement. These should focus on raising standards of attainment and meeting the needs of all learners. Recent improvements in teaching and learning mean that the school is well placed to move forward with the national initiative, *Curriculum for Excellence*. Staff are increasing their skills in evaluating their own work and some support each other very well in new initiatives. More strategic approaches to sharing good practice and better planned teamwork across the school are needed for the school's continued improvement.

9. What happens next?

We are confident that 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 following 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.

- Raise attainment in English language, mathematics and Gaelic.
- Ensure that levels of pace and challenge in the primary classes are appropriate to meet children's varying needs.
- Further develop approaches to self-evaluation to ensure consistently high quality learning experiences for all children.

At the last Care Commission inspection of the nursery classes there was one requirement which had 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 Broadford Primary School and Nursery Classes.

Primary school

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

Nursery classes

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 classes.

The curriculum	good
Improvement through self-evaluation	satisfactory

HM Inspector: Patricia Watson
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