

**Craigtinny Primary School
City of Edinburgh Council
19 June 2007**

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1. Background

Craigentinny Primary School was inspected in February 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 chairperson of the School Board, the school chaplain and a group of parents.¹

The inspection team also evaluated aspects of the school's progress in implementing national recommendations related to improving aspects of school meals provision.

The school serves the Craiginny and Restalrig part of Edinburgh and the surrounding area. At the time of the inspection the roll was 208, including 12 pupils in two supported language classes for pupils with language and communication difficulties and 47 children in the nursery class. Pupils were placed in the supported language classes by the education authority, and came from all parts of Edinburgh City. The proportion of pupils who were entitled to free school meals was well above the national average. Pupils' attendance was below 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.

- Very high levels of pastoral care.
- Mannerly, courteous and well behaved pupils who wanted to learn.
- The inclusive climate for learning and the action taken to involve pupils from the supported language classes in the work and activities of mainstream classes.
- Assistance provided to vulnerable pupils and those requiring additional support in their learning.
- Partnership with parents and wider agencies to support pupils in their ongoing achievement.

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

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

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

Parents, pupils and staff were positive about almost all aspects of the school. Parents reported that their children were well cared for, that staff made them feel welcome and that their child enjoyed being at school. Around a quarter had concerns about the accommodation and the school's reputation in the community. A similar number wanted more information on the school's priorities for improvement. Almost all pupils enjoyed being at school and they felt that the school helped them to keep safe and healthy. A few thought that pupils' behaviour could be improved and that not all pupils were treated fairly. All staff were content with almost all aspects of the school. They all liked working in the school and thought that there was mutual respect between staff and pupils. They thought that pupils' successes were regularly celebrated and indiscipline was dealt with effectively. A few staff wanted more opportunities to be involved in decision making.

4. How good are learning, teaching and achievement?

Pupils' learning experiences and achievements

The overall quality of the curriculum was good. It was broad and well balanced. Available curriculum time was being used flexibly to allocate additional time to specific areas. The impact of these initiatives was not yet being monitored effectively to ensure it delivered improvements in attainment. Pupils were grouped according to ability across P6 and P7 for both mathematics and writing in an effort to improve attainment but this had yet to be realised. Both French and Spanish were offered in alternate years and pupils were progressing well in their reading, writing, listening and speaking skills in their additional language. Enterprise, health and Eco School Scotland initiatives were beginning to feature in pupils' experiences but these were at an early stage of development. While health was delivered within environmental studies there was a lack of focus on healthy eating and some topics were not covered regularly enough. Good attention was given to science within the environmental studies programmes. Pupils' experiences in the expressive arts were well supported by specialist teachers for art and design, physical education and music. However, all pupils were not yet receiving two hours of quality physical education each week. Information and communications technology (ICT) was not yet featuring sufficiently in pupils' experiences. School guidance for the teaching of English language was not sufficiently clear which made teachers' planning for progression in pupils' learning difficult. Overall, the quality of teaching was good with some very good features. In almost all lessons teachers were well organised, gave clear explanations and made good use of questioning to check pupils' understanding. They summarised teaching points at the end of lessons to make sure pupils had all understood what had been covered. Almost all teachers provided very well-planned opportunities for pupils to work

together. However, teachers did not always make effective use of assessment information to build on pupils' prior learning experiences. Homework was well linked to classwork in almost all classes.

The quality of pupils' learning experiences was good. Almost all pupils were well behaved, stayed on task and continued working without close supervision. They were attentive and followed classroom routines well. Pupils were clear about the focus of their learning across the school and consistently demonstrated positive attitudes to their work. Pupils collaborated and interacted very well with each other in group tasks to good effect. They respected and responded well to each others contribution. In most lessons they were involved in asking each other questions about their learning, for example during presentations. Pupils responded very well when the learning was active and challenging. However in a few classes the pace of learning and choice of activities did not always present sufficient challenge for all pupils.

The school was in the early stages of developing systematically pupils' wider achievements. Across the school, pupils demonstrated self-confidence and positive attitudes towards others and the world around them. They responded well to opportunities to take on responsibilities and to be involved in decision-making through the pupil council, football committee and 'Craigie Crew', a group which supported younger pupils in play. Pupils had a few opportunities to develop their sports skills in basketball and rugby, supported by a class teacher and the active schools coordinator but only a small number of pupils took advantage of such opportunities. Older pupils supported others through the befriending initiative. Pupils had only recently begun to learn about environmental issues. They were developing their awareness of the needs of others through fundraising for a range of charities. Global awareness was strengthened by supporting pupils from their link school for deaf pupils in Kisoro, Uganda, Africa.

English language

The overall quality of pupils' attainment in English language was adequate. Overall attainment remained steady but had not improved in recent years. Assessment information for all aspects of English language was not always reliable. Across the school, the majority of pupils reached appropriate levels of attainment in reading and writing. Attainment in reading and writing had shown some signs of improvement in recent years at P3, P4 and P6 but these were not always sustained. The majority of pupils in P7 were attaining in line with national expectations. Most pupils were making good progress in their class work. A significant number were capable of achieving higher standards. Pupils who needed additional support to attain in aspects of reading and writing were making appropriate progress. At all stages, pupils listened attentively to teachers' explanations and instructions. By P7, the majority of pupils demonstrated confidence in group discussions and were able to present and share ideas. They had a good awareness of audience and listened well to each other. Throughout the school, most pupils had a good understanding of what they had read. Pupils had access to a wide range of books and by P7 talked confidently about their favourite authors and types of books. Across the school, pupils wrote regularly for a variety of purposes, including poetry, letters and reports. They presented their written work well but did not always write at sufficient length. The majority of pupils did not always use basic spelling and punctuation appropriately in their writing.

Mathematics

The overall quality of attainment in mathematics was adequate and had improved from a low point three years ago. The majority of pupils were attaining appropriate national levels. Most pupils were making good progress with their classwork. Commendably an increasing number of P2 pupils were attaining national levels earlier than would normally be expected. This good start was not always sustained as pupils progressed through the school. There were weaknesses in the arrangements for assessing pupils' attainment in mathematics. Pupils could interpret an appropriate range of graphs and at every stage they had carried out surveys. This information was presented very clearly in graphs and charts and pupils could discuss their findings with confidence. At P1 to P3, pupils were making a good start to their number work and their skills in number and mental agility were developing well. Pupils at P5 demonstrated confidence with fractions and a few pupils were attaining appropriate levels earlier than would be expected. Pupils in the upper stages were making good progress in their number work and were competent in their understanding of calculations involving measure and percentages but were not so confident with those to do with time. Pupils at all stages had a good understanding of two- and three-dimensional shapes and their properties. At P7, pupils demonstrated confidence in their understanding of position and movement and could describe different kinds of angles. Pupils' awareness of a range of problem solving strategies varied from stage to stage and few pupils were able to apply them to solve mathematical problems. Pupils were not yet using ICT effectively to support and develop their learning in mathematics.

5. How well are pupils' learning needs met?

The quality of arrangements to address pupils' learning needs was good. Teachers and support staff provided effective support for pupils experiencing difficulties with aspects of their learning or behaviour. They used a range of appropriate strategies to identify pupils' learning needs. This included effective liaison with relevant support agencies. All teachers ensured that tasks in most curricular areas were well matched to the needs of individual pupils. However, the level of challenge for more able pupils, particularly in writing, was too limited. Staff were not always aware of pupils' prior learning and this resulted in repetition and lack of progression for a significant minority of pupils. Assessments of pupil attainment were not undertaken regularly enough. Teachers assessment of pupils' progress required more careful monitoring and support. Not all pupils at the upper stages were following suitable programmes to address their needs because of weakness in the arrangements for assessments. Pupils receiving additional support were making very good progress towards meeting their individual learning and behaviour targets. These targets, within their individualised educational programmes (IEPs) were regularly shared with their parents. The support for learning teacher had developed very positive relationships with individual pupils and had a good overview of the needs of the pupils with whom she worked. The school had good arrangements for supporting pupils at times of transition, for example, when entering P1 and when transferring at P7 to secondary schools.

Pupils in the language classes were well supported in their learning by teachers, nursery nurses, learning assistants and speech and language therapists and were making good progress towards their individual learning targets contained in their IEPs. Targets were appropriate but were not yet linked sufficiently to aspects of the curriculum. The curricular

guidance in place for staff required greater detail to ensure that teaching delivered appropriate progression in pupils' learning. A number of pupils were accessing lessons alongside their mainstream peers and this was a very positive feature of provision. Pupils were developing their skills and understanding in number work well through effectively planned practical activities. Similar positive progress was being made in English language where various resources were being well used to motivate pupils in their development and use of language to good effect. Pupils in the language classes participated well in playground activities and many were forming positive relationships with mainstream pupils. A range of appropriate language resources was available to staff and these were well used to meet the specific communication needs of pupils. However, ICT could be used to greater effect within the curriculum and pupils would benefit from more active learning experiences across the curriculum. The school staff, supported by the authority's educational psychologist, has started to review pupils' needs, with a view to opening coordinated support plans if required. Through experiences in personal and social development, health education and swimming, pupils were developing their social use of language and being helped to express their feelings more confidently. While staff were aware of pupils' progress they were not yet formally tracking their attainment.

6. How good is the environment for learning?

Aspect	Comment
Pastoral care	The quality of pastoral care was very good. All staff were caring and strongly committed to ensuring pupils' well-being. Staff knew their pupils well and responded sensitively to their social, emotional and physical needs. Staff worked hard to develop pupils' self-esteem and confidence with some success. Pupils showed care and concern for each other and older pupils effectively supported those younger than themselves. Procedures for ensuring the care and welfare of pupils, including child protection were effective and well-established. Further initiatives were required to improve pupils' attendance. The school's well established personal and social education programme called 'peace builders' had been very well received by both pupils and parents and underpinned the safe, supportive climate for learning. Older pupils, supported by learning assistants, effectively supervised and encouraged younger pupils to be active during intervals and lunchtimes.

Aspect	Comment
Quality of accommodation and facilities	<p>The quality of accommodation was good. Classrooms were large, bright and well-maintained. There were a large number of storage areas and additional spaces that were used effectively for teaching groups of pupils and a well-equipped base for pupils receiving additional support. A separate gymnasium, dining hall and library were all of a good size. Building security arrangements were appropriate. Only the ground floor could be accessed by those with mobility problems. The large playground and woodland garden provided plentiful space for outdoor play. Toilet areas were of poor quality and the temperature in the building varied considerably from room to room. Many areas were cold. From outside, the school looked drab and uninviting and often suffered from vandalism which had proved costly to repair.</p>
Climate and relationships, expectations and promoting achievement and equality	<p>Staff and pupils had a strong sense of pride in the school. Almost all pupils were polite, friendly and conscientious in their approach to learning. They were happy in school and worked well with each other. Staff had very good, and in some cases excellent, relationships with pupils. Pupil behaviour was of a high standard. The small number of incidents of indiscipline were handled effectively and did not disrupt others' learning. Communication between staff and senior managers was not always effective and some staff did not feel appropriately informed about developments. Staff morale was sometimes affected by professional disagreements among staff. There were appropriate opportunities for religious observance and spiritual reflection. Staff expected pupils to behave well and work hard in class but not all staff had sufficiently high expectations of pupils' attainment and wider achievements. Expectations of the presentation of pupils work were variable. Pupils from the language and communication classes were well included in the life of the school. Aspects of school programmes such as religious and moral education and personal and social development helped promote positive attitudes to others, a sense of equality and a celebration of difference but these had yet to be promoted effectively across the wider work of the school. All staff had undertaken racial equality training and racial and bullying incidents were being logged appropriately.</p>

Aspect	Comment
Partnership with parents and the community	<p>The school's partnerships with parents and the wider community were very good. The School Board provided good support for the school. The headteacher worked effectively in partnership with other services, including family support workers and education welfare officers, to support children experiencing difficulty in school. The local police had been involved in a safety initiative for infants and in an anti-vandalism focus for older pupils. The school worked effectively with the local 'ripple youth project' to support pupils out of school hours. Pupils' art work had been used by the Leith Community Arts team as part of their annual displays. There were well established pastoral and curricular links with Leith Academy where a comprehensive programme supported pupils well prior to their transfer to secondary school. Teachers produced an informative annual report. They met with parents to discuss children's progress on a formal and informal basis. A number of parents were involved in school as parental helpers and parents were provided with opportunities to discuss materials used within sensitive health topics. Termly newsletters from the headteacher, with contributions from class teachers, kept all members of the school community informed about school events, priorities and achievements.</p>

7. Leading and improving the school

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

Overall, Craigentiny Primary School provided a positive and supportive learning environment for pupils. Staff were caring towards pupils and pupils were very happy at school. Teaching was good with very good features. Attainment in English language and mathematics was not high enough and expectations of what pupils could achieve at some stages needed to be raised. Teachers did not always carry out assessments appropriately or make effective use of assessment information. With greater pace and challenge in their learning pupils were capable of achieving higher standards. There was a need for the school to develop pupils' skills in ICT much further. Pupils in the language classes were making good progress in their learning and were able to engage regularly in lessons with their mainstream peers.

The experienced and committed headteacher had been in post for ten years. She knew the community well and had forged many very effective partnerships with local groups and wider agencies who supported the work of the school. She had established positive relationships with staff and pupils, who found her to be very approachable and supportive. She had a caring and outgoing manner and promoted the school well. She was committed to the well-being of pupils and along with staff had established a positive, inclusive

atmosphere for learning and achievement. In what had been a difficult time for the school in terms of staff continuity she had ensured that morale remained positive. She had made several good appointments to the staff. She was well supported by a hardworking depute who had successfully taken forward developments in teaching and learning. The depute provided high quality support to staff, parents, students and pupils alike and had effectively promoted improvements within the nursery. Two principal teachers fulfilled their remits well, one of whom had made improvements to pupils experiences within the English language programme. However, senior staff remits were not sufficiently well developed to allow staff to make the desired impact on the work of the school. The school lacked a clearly communicated vision. Priorities for development and improvement had not been appropriately identified, articulated or followed through. While all staff were involved in working groups to take forward aspects of the schools development, senior managers and staff had not yet succeeded in ensuring all staff worked together as a team to improve the quality of learning and teaching. Some steps had been taken to monitor and evaluate the work of the school, including the sampling of pupils' jotters, monitoring of forward plans and tracking of pupils' progress. However, these processes had not led to identifiable improvements. Commendably staff were involved in peer observation visits but there were no formal systems in place to evaluate the quality of teaching and pupils' classroom learning experiences. Overall, the processes of self-evaluation lacked specific focus and rigour and were not embedded in the work of all staff. The school required support from the education authority to develop and sustain its capacity for improvement.

Main points for action

The school and education authority, in liaison with HM Inspectors, should take action to ensure improvement in:

- attainment in English language and mathematics;
- extending the use of information and communications technology across all areas of the curriculum and ensuring pupils' skills in information and communications technology are developed systematically;
- approaches to assessment and the monitoring and tracking of pupils progress;
- ensuring a much more focussed approach to evaluating the work of the school to support and challenge staff in ongoing improvement;
- raising the level of expectation of achievement and continue to improve attendance; and
- reviewing the roles and responsibilities of senior managers to provide a clear direction for the ongoing work of the school.

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. HM Inspectors will continue to engage with the school and the education authority in monitoring progress, and will undertake a follow-through inspection. This will result in a report to parents, within two years of the publication of this report, on the extent of improvement that has been achieved.

Donald Macleod
HM Inspector

19 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	good

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

Leading and improving the school	
Leadership of the headteacher	adequate
Leadership across the school	adequate
Self-evaluation	weak

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.

What parents thought the school did well	What parents think the school could do better
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All parents thought that the school made them feel welcome and that staff showed care and concern for their child. • Almost all parents thought their child enjoyed school and that the school was well led. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A few parents had concerns about the maintenance of the school building and the schools reputation. • A few thought that the school could set higher standards for pupil attainment and make it more clear to parents the standard of work expected from the pupils. • A few wanted more information on the school's priorities for improvement.
What pupils thought the school did well	What pupils think the school could do better
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They enjoyed being at school and thought teachers knew them well. • Teachers explained things clearly and helped them when they were having difficulties with classwork. • Teachers listened to what they said and checked their homework. • They felt safe and well looked after. • Teachers expected them to work hard and told them when they had done something well. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Address the behaviour of some pupils. • A few thought that not all pupils were treated fairly.
What staff thought the school did well	What staff think the school could do better
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall staff were pleased with all aspects of the school's work. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A few staff and a few support staff wanted to be more involved in decision making.

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 Children and Families, 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, T1 Saughton House, Broomhouse Drive, Edinburgh EH11 3XD or by telephoning 0131 244 8293. Copies are also available on our website www.hmie.gov.uk.

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Should you wish to comment on any aspect of primary inspections, you should write in the first instance to Chris McIlroy, HMCI, at HM Inspectorate of Education, Denholm House, Almondvale Business Park, Almondvale Way, Livingston EH54 6GA.

If you have a concern about this report, you should write in the first instance to our Complaints Manager, HMIE Business Management Unit, Second Floor, Denholm House, Almondvale Business Park, Almondvale Way, Livingston, EH54 6GA. You can also e-mail HMIEComplaints@hmie.gsi.gov.uk. A copy of our complaints procedure is available from this office, by telephoning 01506 600200 or from our website at www.hmie.gov.uk.

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

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