



**Kinmylies Primary School
and Nursery Class
Inverness
The Highland Council
9 February 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. Where applicable, you will also be able to find descriptions of good practice in the school.

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.

Contents

1. The school
2. Particular strengths of the school
3. How well do children learn and achieve?
4. How well do staff work with others to support children's learning?
5. Are staff and children actively involved in improving their school community?
6. Does the school have high expectations of all children?
7. Does the school have a clear sense of direction?
8. What happens next?

1. The school

Kinmylies Primary School is a non-denominational school with a nursery class. It serves the area of Kinmylies in Inverness. The roll was 152, including 36 in the nursery, when the inspection was carried out in December 2009. Children's attendance was in line with the national average in 2007/2008. At the time of the inspection the headteacher had been in post for around 15 months.

2. Particular strengths of the school

- Children who are polite, enthusiastic and keen to learn.
- Transition arrangements between primary 7 and the local secondary school.
- The positive start made by children in the nursery class.

3. How well do children learn and achieve?

Learning and achievement

Children in the nursery class are motivated learners who concentrate well on a range of activities. They cooperate well to complete tasks. Most children are learning successfully to take turns and share. They help to plan aspects of their learning by identifying what they know and what they would like to investigate. Across the primary stages, almost all children are polite, motivated and keen to learn. In early years classes, children learn to take turns and share resources effectively with each other. All children participate well in group discussions when given the chance to do so. In a few classes, this is well structured. Across the primary stages, children do not make enough independent use of information and communications technology (ICT). They do not always know what to do to improve their work.

In the nursery class, children are beginning to make effective use of technology, such as digital and video cameras to record activities. They concentrate well when experimenting with different techniques in art. All nursery children are involved fully in preparing for a concert. They enjoy singing a variety of songs. In the primary classes, children benefit from a range of cultural experiences, including trips to the theatre. They are developing a good understanding of healthy lifestyles through work on diet and exercise, active playtimes and a

walk to school week. A few children develop leadership skills through their involvement in the pupil council and eco committee. Older children develop their physical abilities well by taking part in sports activities. There could be more after-school activities available, particularly for younger children.

Most children in the nursery class are making good progress. Almost all children listen well and enjoy stories being read to them. Almost all children recognise their own name and most are attempting to write it. Children are developing their understanding of early mathematics through play and show a growing awareness of number. Across the primary stages, attainment in English language has fallen over the last three years. There is not a clear improvement trend in mathematics. The majority of children achieve appropriate national levels in reading and writing. Most achieve these levels in mathematics. In English language, most children listen closely to others. Most contribute well when talking with a partner or in small groups. They are confident when reading prepared text. However, a few children do not enjoy reading at school. The majority of children write well for a range of purposes. They do not write at length and redraft work often enough. Presentation of writing is too variable. In mathematics, most children are confident in mental calculations and written work is accurate. In P7, children are developing good problem solving skills. Children should develop skills in handling information from surveys more often. More use should be made of ICT to extend children's learning in mathematics.

Curriculum and meeting learning needs

The curriculum in the nursery class is based on play and active learning. When planning activities, staff take good account of children's interests. They are beginning to ask children what they want to learn. Across the primary stages, staff provide a broad curriculum. There is a strong emphasis on citizenship skills but it is not clear whether this work is having an impact on children's learning. From P4 to P7, staff are using a range of approaches to make mathematics more interesting. Staff should allocate more time for children to use

their literacy and numeracy skills in other curricular areas. Children do not receive two hours of high-quality physical education each week. The school is at a very early stage in introducing *Curriculum for Excellence*.

Nursery staff create a caring environment for learning. They work sensitively with parents to meet the needs of children well. Staff observe children carefully and quickly identify when a child needs extra support to learn. In the primary classes, lessons are not always successful because learning activities are not always well matched to the range of abilities within classes. The quality of children's learning needs to be more consistent throughout the school. In too many lessons teachers overly direct learning activities. Staff do not always share the purpose of lessons with children. A few children find it hard to maintain good levels of concentration. This is because too much time is spent on some activities and because teachers occasionally set tasks that provide insufficient challenge for many learners. Children for whom English is an additional language do not receive sufficient support with their learning. There could be more use of dual language resources. Homework activities are regular and varied to support children's learning. The support for learning teacher works very well with class teachers and pupil support staff to provide advice and support for children with additional learning needs. Children requiring additional help with their learning have individual support plans and are beginning to be involved in setting learning targets with these.

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

Staff work with a range of partners to support children's learning. These include health professionals and the community police. In the nursery, staff encourage all parents to participate in their children's learning. The school has developed good links with local businesses resulting in improvements to the school's garden area. The Parent Council is very active in the school. They participate in a wide range of fund raising activities. Parents have a positive view of the school

and are keen to develop further their partnerships with the headteacher to assist with school improvement. Parents would like the present discipline procedures reviewed and then implemented by all staff. The school is good at responding to complaints. However, a few parents feel that the school does not take sufficient account of their views. Parents are informed about children's progress through parents' meetings and an annual school report. The school takes good steps to involve parents in sensitive aspects of health education. Effective arrangements are in place to support children as they move from nursery to P1 and from P7 to Charleston Academy.

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

Children contribute to school improvement through their roles on the pupil council, the eco committee and as playground monitors. A few have recently trained as junior road safety officers. In the nursery class, staff act on feedback from parents. At the primary stages, teachers have begun to seek and act on children's views through surveys and the pupil council. Non-teaching staff contribute well to the wider life of the school. Staff have yet to be actively involved in school improvement groups. Previous school improvement plans have not resulted in improvements to the curriculum or to children's learning. The headteacher and staff should make more use of information on children's progress to tackle underachievement. Staff have yet to receive regular feedback on their work, including classroom practices, to ensure consistency in the quality of children's learning experiences.

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

Across the school, most staff have positive relationships with children. Almost all children are friendly and polite to staff and one another. Expectations of children's behaviour are not consistent across all classes. Children's achievements are celebrated at regular assemblies and in a few wall displays. In the nursery, resources need

to reflect different cultures better. Nursery and primary staff are aware of what to do to keep children safe and well. Catering staff have still to receive training in this area. Religious observance is celebrated through regular services led by the school chaplain. Children are treated with respect and feel safe and valued. Staff should expect higher standards of work from all learners. Staff work sensitively with children and families to ensure that other cultures are recognised and celebrated.

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

The headteacher should establish with staff and parents a clear vision for moving the school forward. She has not yet succeeded in fostering effective teamwork to bring about the necessary improvements in attainment and the curriculum. All staff acknowledged the need to work together to bring about improvement. The school management team will need on-going support from the education authority to ensure improvement in children's learning experiences.

8. What happens next?

We will carry out a follow-through inspection visit within one year of publication of this report and will report to parents on the extent to which the school has improved. Following that visit, we may continue to check the improvements the school has made. We may also carry out a second follow-through inspection within two years of the original inspection report. If a second follow-through inspection visit is necessary then it will result in another report to parents on the extent of improvement that the school has made.

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

- Raise attainment in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Take forward *Curriculum for Excellence* to meet the needs of all children more effectively.
- Involve all staff, children and parents in thorough self-evaluation and action to bring about improvement.
- Improve leadership of learning across the school.

At the last Care Commission inspection of the nursery class there were three requirements, one of which had been addressed. Outstanding issues are carried forward in this report.

Requirements:

- The provider should work to ensure toilets are located to allow children to access them independently. This is in order to comply with good practice outlined in Standard National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the Age of 16. 2.2 a safe environment.
- The provider should review the practice of issuing temporary contracts, in view of the implications of this for adversely affecting staff morale and continuity of care for children. This is in order to comply with good practice outlined in Standard 14.7 well managed service.

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 Kinmylies Primary School and Nursery Class.

Primary school

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

Nursery class

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

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

The curriculum	weak
Improvement through self-evaluation	weak

HM Inspector: Aileen Monaghan
9 February 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

If you would like to find out more about our inspections or get an electronic copy of this report, please go to www.hmie.gov.uk.

Please contact us if you want to know how to get the report in a different format, for example, in a translation, or if you wish to comment about any aspect of our inspections. You can contact us at HMIEnquiries@hmie.gsi.gov.uk or write to us at BMCT, HM Inspectorate of Education, Denholm House, Almondvale Business Park, Almondvale Way, Livingston EH54 6GA.

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.

Crown Copyright 2010
HM Inspectorate of Education