



**Lamington Primary School  
South Lanarkshire Council  
09 June 2009**

This report tells you about the quality of education at the school<sup>1</sup>. 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 parents<sup>2</sup> 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](http://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.

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<sup>1</sup> The term ‘school’ is used to include the work of the nursery class, where relevant.

<sup>2</sup> 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**

Lamington Primary School is a non-denominational school. It serves the village of Lamington and the surrounding area. The roll was 33 when the inspection was carried out in April 2009. Pupils' attendance was in line with the national average in 2007/2008. Almost half of the children attended the school as a result of placing requests by their parents. The headteacher was also headteacher of Coulter Primary School, another small school situated three miles away.

## **2. Particular strengths of the school**

- Very well-behaved, confident and motivated children with an enthusiasm for learning.
- The commitment of all staff and the involvement of children and parents in bringing about improvements within the school.
- High levels of care and respect shown by all staff and children towards each other.
- High quality learning experiences.
- The headteacher's leadership for learning.

## **3. Examples of good practice**

- The creation of a garden to provide relevant learning experiences for the children.
- Effective partnership-working by staff across partner schools to bring about improvements to learners' experiences.
- The use of external funding to improve the school grounds.

## **4. How well do children learn and achieve?**

### **Learning and achievement**

Across the school, children are fully involved in high-quality learning experiences. They are enthusiastic learners and work well together in pairs and groups. They take responsibility for their own learning, for example, confidently reviewing their own and others' work. They know how to be healthy and safe and most attend the after-school clubs held at the partner school. All children contribute well to the life of the school and older pupils effectively lead many initiatives. These include arrangements for celebrating success and organising events. For example, performances demonstrating their skills in drama and music. Children cooperate very well together on creating 'idea trails' which develop their discussion and decision-making skills and lead their learning within environmental studies. In art and design lessons, they are actively involved in working creatively with an artist to create self-portrait mosaic tiles to decorate the new boundary fence in the school grounds. Over the last few years, the school has maintained high standards of attainment. A few children are capable of achieving national levels in listening, talking, reading and writing much earlier than they presently do. Almost all listen very well and talk knowledgeably about a range of topics. Children read well with understanding and are encouraged to read for enjoyment through the 'literacy circles'. They confidently select appropriate information from their reading. They are now making better progress in their writing and write well for a range of purposes including interesting stories about their 'Titanic' topic. In mathematics, children are accurate in written and oral calculations and have very good skills in mental agility. They use computers well to read, understand and display information in graphs. They can estimate length and weight and most measure with precision. Most can solve problems and apply them in a range of contexts.

## **Curriculum and meeting learning needs**

Across the school staff are developing their knowledge of *Curriculum for Excellence* and provide a variety of stimulating activities which link children's learning. In the best examples, such as in aspects of environmental studies, these activities ensure depth and progression in children's learning as they progress up the school. Notably, all children are taught how to swim. More use could be made of the school grounds to ensure all children receive two hours quality physical education every week. Within environmental studies, teachers involve children in leading and planning their own learning. Children in P1 to P3 are involved in deciding what they want to discover about pirates. Across the school staff plan the curriculum well to ensure that children develop very good personal and social development skills and show high levels of respect for each other.

Children's learning needs are very well met. Almost all learning activities are well matched to meet the needs of children. A few higher achieving children are capable of undertaking more challenging tasks to extend their learning further. Those children with additional support needs are identified quickly and appropriately supported. Learning targets focus on the skills needed for children to make progress in learning. Teachers give very clear explanations and instructions and share the purposes of lessons very well. They effectively question children's understanding. They mostly find out what children know and can do and provide appropriate learning activities. Children can complete tasks without close supervision and are engaged in their own learning. They are very well supported by learning assistants. Homework is regularly set and most tasks are appropriately varied.

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

The school has positive and productive relationships with parents and the wider community. Together, they all work closely to identify priorities for improvements. The school handles any complaints well

and parents are pleased with its work. Staff have formed a wide range of effective links to improve learning experiences for children. This includes highly-effective joint working with its partner school. The Active Schools coordinator organises a wide range of successful activities helping children to lead more active and healthy lifestyles. The school worked closely with the Clydesdale Community Initiative as part of a whole school garden project led by the children. Together they planned and built a vegetable garden. The vegetables are used by the school cook as ingredients within the meals children eat at lunchtime. There are many fundraising events which successfully involve the wider community. Helpful newsletters, information events and a series of practical leaflets inform parents of school developments and how to support their child's learning. The Parent Council supports the school very well and parents are consulted appropriately about sensitive health issues. The school has effective arrangements in place to ensure continuity in children's learning as they progress from nursery to P1 and from P7 to Biggar High School.

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

Children, parents and staff are effectively involved in decision-making within the school. Their opinions are valued and are taken account of in ways to improve the school. The very responsible pupil council organise and lead many activities. The eco committee successfully organised a very well-supported event with the community to save energy sponsored by the World Wildlife Foundation. They also helped the school achieve a silver award from Eco-Schools Scotland. Staff contribute to all aspects of the work of the school. They are involved in working groups, share good practice and actively seek advice to bring about further improvements. They have in place a number of very useful approaches to evaluating the work of the school. These have had a significant and positive impact on improving learners' experiences.

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

The school has an outstanding ethos with a very caring, motivating environment and a strong sense of community. Staff show concern for children's wellbeing and understand the school's child protection policy and procedures. Children, parents and staff are proud of their school and relationships are very positive. They treat each other with consideration and respect. Children's behaviour is exemplary, they feel safe and work hard to do the best they can. Bullying is very rare and staff deal very well with any incidents that occur. Children are encouraged to think for themselves and are independent in their learning. They are beginning to take responsibility for their own progress and there is scope to develop this further. The school has appropriate arrangements for religious observance.

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

The headteacher provides strong and supportive leadership. She sets a clear agenda for improvement based on ensuring relevant contexts for learning. Her approach ensures that children and staff actively bring about improvements to the school and lead their own learning. She manages the pace of change well and has created an effective working partnership between Lamington Primary School and its partner school. The principal teacher supports the headteacher very well. She is successfully developing aspects of the curriculum and approaches to learning and teaching. Support staff and teachers lead projects very well. The school is well placed to work with the education authority to build on its many strengths.

## **9. What happens next?**

The school's self-evaluation is leading to improvements in children's learning. As a result, the inspection team was able to change its focus during the inspection to help the school plan to improve even more. There is a very good quality of education

provided by the school and 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.

- Further develop the curriculum in line with the principles of '*Curriculum for Excellence*'.
- Continue to develop ways to ensure that all tasks take full account of and build on children's prior learning.

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 Lamington Primary School.

<b>Improvements in performance</b>	<b>very good</b>
<b>Learners' experiences</b>	<b>very good</b>
<b>Meeting learning needs</b>	<b>very good</b>

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

<b>The curriculum</b>	<b>very good</b>
<b>Improvement through self-evaluation</b>	<b>very good</b>

**HM Inspector:** Elizabeth C Cole

09 June 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