

**St Andrew's Primary School
Rothesay
Isle of Bute
Argyll and Bute Council
5 September 2006**

Contents	Page
1. Background	1
2. Key strengths	1
3. What are the views of parents, pupils and staff?	2
4. How good are learning, teaching and achievement?	2
5. How well are pupils supported?	4
6. How good is the environment for learning?	5
7. Improving the school	6
Appendix 1 Indicators of quality	8
Appendix 2 Summary of questionnaire responses	9
How can you contact us?	10

1. Background

St Andrew's Primary School was inspected in April 2006 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 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 met the chairperson of the School Board, representatives of the parent-teacher association (PTA), and a group of parents¹.

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

St Andrew's Primary School is a denominational school serving the island of Bute. At the time of the inspection the roll was 91. The proportion of pupils who were entitled to free school meals was in line with the national average. Pupils' attendance was in line with the national average. At the time of the inspection, the headteacher had been in post for one year, following a short period as acting headteacher. Officers of the education authority supported the school very well during this time of change.

2. Key strengths

HM Inspectors identified the following key strengths.

- The effectiveness of the headteacher in achieving significant improvements, particularly in standards of attainment.
- Relationships within the school and the attention given to pupils' care and welfare, achieved through excellent teamwork among staff.
- Strong and productive partnerships with parents and the community.
- Very effective working with partner agencies on a range of initiatives to enhance pupils' learning and development and promote healthy lifestyles.
- The attention given to promoting success and celebrating pupils' achievements.

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 all 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 very positive about all aspects of the school's work. All parents expressed high levels of satisfaction with the school. They thought that the school was well led and they had a clear idea of its priorities for improving the education of pupils. Pupils enjoyed being at the school and felt well supported by staff. They thought that teachers expected them to work hard and helped them with their work. They were enthusiastic about initiatives to promote healthy eating. Staff were very happy working in the school. They appreciated the strong teamwork and leadership and the opportunities to discuss and share practice.

4. How good are learning, teaching and achievement?

Pupils' learning experiences and achievements

The structure of the curriculum was very good. Teachers used additional time allocated to improve standards in literacy and numeracy well. Effective use of a range of visits and visitors enhanced pupils' learning experiences. Examples included valued input from emergency services staff and contributions from a poet and storyteller. Pupils took part in a wide range of activities designed to develop skills of citizenship and enterprise and to promote Scottish culture. Very good contributions from the visiting teacher of physical education and an instrumental instructor were extending pupils' learning. Health promotion was well integrated across the curriculum. Overall, the quality of teaching was good. There were many examples of very good practice. Teachers used a good range of approaches, including effective use of information and communications technology (ICT), to motivate pupils. They shared the purposes of lessons with pupils and, in most lessons, teachers made good use of questioning to check pupils' understanding. In a few lessons, teachers used questioning skilfully to develop pupils' thinking. They did not always provide enough good opportunities for pupils to develop skills as independent learners. Teachers gave encouraging and constructive feedback on pupils' work. Some teachers had introduced imaginative ways to encourage pupils to take increasing responsibility for the planning and quality of their homework.

Most pupils were well motivated and attentive and worked well on tasks set. They showed particular enthusiasm for activities where they were actively involved in their learning. These included learning about fractions in P4 and participating in a technology challenge in P6/P7. Pupils at P1 to P3 had their learning experiences extended and developed through the well-planned play activities and were developing good skills in working independently. At all stages, most pupils could work well together in groups. This included, for example, role-play in P2/P3 and planting seeds in P4. Pupils had made a good start to setting learning targets and evaluating their own and others' work. Overall, however, they did not always have enough opportunities to be actively involved in their learning. For example, they needed more occasions to

take part in presentations and group discussion. In a few lessons, the pace of learning and level of challenge were too slow.

Pupils achieved in a wide range of activities. They showed a good awareness of environmental issues. The school had achieved the Eco School bronze award and was making very good progress towards the silver award. Pupils and parents helped with the Big Bird Watch survey, and judges from Scotland in Bloom had been impressed with work done to improve the school garden. At a harvest meal for parents, pupils had served soup made from vegetables that they had grown themselves. Pupils gained confidence through performing to their families and the wider community in, for example, the very successful Resurrection Rock performance at Easter. The success of pupils at P5 in a construction competition resulted in all pupils at P4 to P7 benefiting from the prize of a visit to Scotland Street School Museum. Pupils' commendable success in fund-raising demonstrated their concern for others. Senior pupils were very responsible in their duties as playground buddies. At P7, pupils achieved consistently high standards in cycling proficiency tests. The very effective pupil council had taken the lead in developing a healthy tuck shop and had initiated a review of the school's values.

English language

The overall quality of attainment in English language was good. Standards of attainment had been maintained in recent years, with improvement in reading, following a dip in performance. Most pupils were achieving appropriate national levels of attainment in reading. Most pupils in P3 and a majority in P4 to P7 were achieving national levels in writing. In both reading and writing, several pupils were attaining these levels earlier than might normally be expected. At the early stages, pupils were making a sound start to developing early reading and writing skills. Staff were just beginning to gather attainment data for listening and talking. Most pupils were making good progress with their classwork. Their skills in listening and talking were developing well. Pupils listened attentively to teachers and were very good at following instructions. Most expressed their ideas and opinions clearly and spoke with confidence about their experiences. They were less skilled in listening and responding appropriately in small group discussions. Pupils at all stages read fluently and with expression. At most stages, they were developing sound skills in writing for a variety of purposes. In a few cases, standards of handwriting and presentation were of a high quality, but they were inconsistent across the school.

Mathematics

The overall quality of attainment in mathematics was very good. Standards of attainment had improved significantly in the previous year and most pupils were achieving appropriate national levels in key aspects of mathematics. Many pupils were achieving these levels earlier than might normally be expected. Pupils with additional support needs in mathematics were very well supported by staff and were making good progress in their learning. At all stages, pupils were able to identify and interpret a range of graphs, as appropriate. At P1/P2, they were learning to use computers to collate and display information and by P6/P7, pupils were confident in using computers for this purpose. Most pupils were confident in carrying out written and mental calculations and, particularly at P6/P7, were able to suggest different approaches to

working out their answers. Pupils at P3 and P4 were developing good understanding of simple fractions. At all stages, pupils demonstrated an appropriate knowledge of the properties of two- and three-dimensional shapes. At P7, they showed a very good understanding of angles. Pupils' skills in problem-solving and enquiry were developing well. At P7, most pupils were confident in identifying and applying a range of strategies to solve problems. Standards of presentation of pupils' work were very good.

5. How well are pupils supported?

The headteacher and staff paid very good attention to pupils' pastoral care. They knew their pupils very well and were sensitive to their individual needs. The ethos of trust and respect in the school reflected the school's values. Staff had a sound understanding of the school's policies and procedures for ensuring the care, welfare and protection of pupils. Pupils felt well supported, safe and secure and knew what to do if they had any concerns. They were enthusiastic about activities designed to promote healthy lifestyles and showed a good understanding of basic nutrition. The school had extended the provision of fruit to include pupils at all stages. Pupils enjoyed the very good quality, well presented school meals. The uptake of meals had increased since the introduction of new menus designed to promote healthy choices. Very good joint working with partner agencies ensured strong support for pupils and their families.

Very good arrangements were in place to ensure that pupils' learning needs were well met overall. The headteacher was very knowledgeable about the needs of all pupils. Effective work with partner agencies, as well as appropriate deployment of staff, planning of tasks and use of resources, were all contributing to meeting the wide range of pupils' needs. Teachers, on the whole, supported individual pupils well and set appropriate tasks which enabled almost all pupils to make good progress in their learning. Additional support for pupils with specific learning and behaviour needs was well established. Pupils with additional needs were well integrated and supported in class. A member of the Area Network Support Team worked in consultation with class teachers to provide well-targeted support. Individualised educational programmes were well developed. Staff made good use of well-structured learning plans to support individual pupils in their learning. Classroom assistants worked very closely with teachers to give well-judged support to pupils. Very successful arrangements were in place to support pupils' transition from nursery to P1 and from P7 to secondary school.

6. How good is the environment for learning?

Aspect	Comment
Quality of accommodation and facilities	<p>The quality of accommodation was good. The school was very clean and generally well maintained. While the separate buildings did not provide an ideal layout, staff made very effective use of the available facilities to create a stimulating learning environment and celebrate pupils' achievements. Strengths included the spacious resources room, the area for play activities, and provision of ICT equipment. The dining room was attractively furnished. Appropriate arrangements for security were in place. The outdoor play area was spacious and attractive, although the playground surface was uneven in places. The boys' toilets required some upgrading. Adaptations to improve access and facilities for disabled users were about to be implemented.</p>
Climate and relationships, expectations and promoting achievement and equality	<p>Pupils were proud of their school. They and staff were very welcoming to visitors. Staff were mutually supportive and teamwork was excellent. Relationships within the school were very positive, and staff worked successfully to create an environment in which pupils felt valued. Pupils responded well to the high expectations set by staff. Through the pupil council, they took an active part in making decisions about aspects of the school's work. Staff gave high priority to celebrating pupils' achievements. Most teachers made very effective use of praise to encourage and motivate pupils. Staff showed strong commitment to inclusion and equality. Pupils demonstrated respect for others. They had good opportunities to learn about other cultures and develop an understanding of racial equality. A sense of fairness was evident throughout the school's work. The school worked closely with the Chaplain to provide regular opportunities for religious observance.</p>

Aspect	Comment
Partnership with parents and the community	Partnerships with parents, the local community and external agencies included some excellent features. The School Board took an active interest in all aspects of the school's work and was extremely supportive. Members had worked with the headteacher to increase parental involvement in school activities. The school communicated very well with parents through handbooks, workshops, curricular bulletins, newsletters and reports on pupils' progress. Parents were consulted on aspects of the school's work and were well briefed about sensitive issues in the health education programme. They were welcomed in the school and encouraged to feel at ease. Attendance at parents' meetings to discuss pupils' progress was very high. The PTA supported the school particularly well through organising successful social and fund-raising activities. Parents gave valued assistance for school activities, including help with developing the garden. The school had established very productive links with external agencies and the local church and community. It valued the very good input from partner agencies involved in community learning and development initiatives. This was supporting pupils' personal development as well as their learning.

7. Improving the school

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

St Andrew's Primary School was providing a sound education for its pupils within a supportive environment in which all pupils were valued. Staff showed excellent teamwork in their commitment to providing increasingly effective learning experiences for pupils. Pupils enjoyed school and were courteous and very well behaved. They were attaining well in English language and very well in mathematics. Pupils were also developing good levels of confidence and responsibility and caring attitudes towards others.

The headteacher provided very good leadership. Her clear vision for the school was understood by staff and shared with parents. In her short time in post, she had achieved significant improvements in the school's work, particularly in standards of attainment. The headteacher was strongly committed to the school and very effective in motivating and supporting staff. Her relationships with pupils, staff and parents were excellent. She had been particularly effective in gaining the support of parents and in securing the school's very productive links with its community. The headteacher encouraged leadership at all levels to promote effective learning and teaching. The principal teacher provided a model of good practice. She had been particularly effective in making improvements at the early stages. The headteacher had introduced rigorous

monitoring and tracking of pupils' progress, and had a sound knowledge of pupils and their needs. Regular monitoring of teachers' plans, sampling of pupils' work and classroom observation resulted in constructive feedback to staff and sharing of good practice. Teachers were becoming increasingly involved in more rigorous self-evaluation. Plans for development included good opportunities for teachers to observe and discuss innovative practice in other schools. The school was very well placed to achieve success in taking forward its priorities for further improvement.

Main points for action

The school and education authority should continue to provide high quality and improving education. In doing so, they should take account of the need to:

- provide more opportunities for pupils to be actively involved in their learning and to develop skills as independent learners;
- ensure that the pace of learning is consistently appropriate for all pupils; and
- improve attainment in English language.

What happens next?

As a result of the high performance, the strong record of improvement and the very effective leadership of this school, HM Inspectors will make no further reports in connection with this inspection. 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. Within two years of the publication of this report the education authority, working with the school, will provide a progress report to parents.

Marjory Robertson
HM Inspector

5 September 2006

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	very good
The teaching process	good
Pupils' learning experiences	good
Pupils' attainment in English language	good
Pupils' attainment in mathematics	very good

How well are pupils supported?	
Pastoral care	very good
Meeting pupils' needs	very good

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

Improving the school	
Leadership	very good
Self-evaluation	good

This report uses the following word scale to make clear judgements made by inspectors:

excellent	excellent
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.

<p>What parents thought the school did well</p>	<p>What parents think the school could do better</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff made parents feel welcome in the school. Parents' evenings were helpful and informative. • Their children enjoyed being at school and were encouraged to work to the best of their ability. • The school had a good reputation in the community and was well led. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There were no significant issues.
<p>What pupils thought the school did well</p>	<p>What pupils think the school could do better</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They enjoyed being at school. • Teachers explained things clearly and helped them with any difficulties. • Teachers expected them to work hard and told them how they were getting on with their work. • Teachers were good at letting them know how their learning could be improved. • The school helped them to keep safe and healthy. • They had a say in deciding how to make the school better. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There were no significant issues.
<p>What staff thought the school did well</p>	<p>What staff think the school could do better</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff were very positive about all aspects of the school's work. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There were no significant issues.

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 Community Services, 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, Ground Floor Suite, Unit 7, Blair Court, Clydebank Business Park, Clydebank, G81 2LA or by telephoning 0141 435 3550. Copies are also available on our website www.hmie.gov.uk.

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

Our complaints procedure

If you have a concern about this report, you should write in the first instance to Hazel Dewart, Business Management Unit, HM Inspectorate of Education, Second Floor, Denholm House, Almondvale Business Park, Almondvale Way, Livingston EH54 6GA. A copy of our complaints procedure is available from this office or by telephoning 01506 600258 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. The Scottish Public Services Ombudsman is fully independent and has powers to investigate complaints about Government departments and agencies. You should write to The Scottish Public Services Ombudsman, 4-6 Melville Street, Edinburgh EH3 7NS. You can also telephone 0870 011 5378 or e-mail enquiries@scottishombudsman.org.uk. More information about the Ombudsman's office can be obtained from the website: www.scottishombudsman.org.uk.

Crown Copyright 2006

HM Inspectorate of Education

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part, except for commercial purposes or in connection with a prospectus or advertisement, provided that the source and date thereof are stated.