

**St Eunan's Primary School
Clydebank
West Dunbartonshire Council**

30 August 2005

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1. Background

St Eunan's Primary School was inspected in May 2005 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 also met the chairperson of the School Board, representatives of the parent-teacher association (PTA), and a group of parents.

St Eunan's Primary School is a denominational school serving the Drumry and Linnvale areas of Clydebank. At the time of the inspection the roll was 353. The proportion of pupils who were entitled to free school meals was well above the national average. Pupils' attendance was in line with the national average. The education authority had plans to relocate the school in a new building. This was presently under consultation with the school community, including the School Board and parents.

2. Key strengths

HM Inspectors identified the following key strengths.

- Pupils' attainment in English language.
- The school's approaches to inclusion and support for pupils' with additional needs.
- Relationships between staff and pupils and the pastoral care provided for the very well behaved, courteous and friendly pupils.
- Partnerships with parents, the School Board and the community.
- Staff expectations of pupils' attainment and achievements.
- The leadership of the headteacher and support of promoted staff.

3. What are the views of parents and carers, 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 and carers, pupils and staff were very positive about most aspects of the school. In discussions, parents and carers were very satisfied with the attention given to the care and welfare of their children. They felt that teachers set high standards for pupils' attainment and that the school had a good reputation in the community. A significant number of comments expressed concern about the proposed relocation of the school. Almost all pupils felt that teachers praised them when they had done something well, explained things clearly and helped them when they were having difficulties. They enjoyed being at school and felt teachers listened to them. A few expressed concern about the behaviour of a few other pupils. All staff liked working in the school. They felt that they celebrated pupils' successes regularly and were committed to promoting pupils' care and welfare. They thought the school communicated clearly to parents the standard of work expected from pupils.

4. How good are learning, teaching and achievement?

Pupils' learning experiences and achievements

Overall, the school provided pupils with a very good curriculum which was broad and well balanced. Staff made good use of information and communications technology (ICT) to support pupils' learning in mathematics and researching topics. Recent improvements to the English language programme had been successful in promoting positive attitudes to reading. At the early stages, learning through play activities focused appropriately on improving pupils' skills in spoken language and social interaction. Teaching approaches had many strengths. Teachers gave clear explanations and made good use of praise to build pupils' self-confidence and reward their achievements. Most made very effective use of direct, interactive teaching, particularly in aspects of English language. They were skilled in using questions to check pupils' understanding. They explained to pupils what they expected them to learn from lessons. However, a few teachers did not make consistent use of questions to involve pupils in discussions. Homework was varied and set regularly.

Almost all pupils were well motivated, hardworking and well behaved. In many classes, pupils worked effectively in pairs or small groups to support one another in a range of learning activities. In several classes, they worked together enthusiastically to solve problems. Pupils responded very well to opportunities to discuss their learning, particularly in writing and social subjects. In the most effective lessons, the pace of learning was brisk. However, in a small number of lessons the pace of learning was slow and a few pupils lost concentration. Across the school, pupils were encouraged to take personal responsibility for their learning.

Almost all pupils were making very good progress towards developing self-confidence and self-esteem. Older pupils took responsibility for others by looking after pupils at P1. Pupils were involved effectively in making decisions about the school through the pupil council. Most recently, the council had surveyed all pupils' views on the proposed

relocation of the school. Pupils' skills in technology, science and social subjects were progressing very well. At P6, pupils had successfully designed a model of a hotel with a revolving rooftop restaurant as part of their participation in a technology challenge. Pupils at P5 demonstrated an awareness of healthy eating and, with the help of a local chef, had created healthy fruit based drinks. Pupils at P2 were highly motivated in their preparations to invite parents into class to experience and celebrate their achievements over the year. Pupils took part enthusiastically in a range of out-of-hours clubs run by staff. Older pupils were developing skills in drama, citizenship, football, netball, fitness and ICT.

English language

The overall quality of attainment in English language was very good. Over the past three years, attainment had been consistently improving. Almost all pupils were achieving appropriate national attainment levels in listening, talking and reading, and most in writing. At all stages, pupils listened very attentively and responded well to teachers' instructions and explanations. They talked confidently and participated well in group discussions. Pupils at the early stages were making very good progress in developing literacy skills. By P3, most pupils had a good awareness of genre. They read competently to gather information and could discuss confidently what they had read. Pupils at P6 and P7 displayed confidence in presenting solo talks on, for example, personal hobbies and historical characters. They talked enthusiastically about their favourite authors and books and expressed their ideas and opinions clearly. Almost all enjoyed reading for pleasure. Throughout the school, pupils wrote well for practical purposes, including science reports. They also produced some very good examples of poetry and used descriptive language well in their writing. Overall, they achieved good standards of punctuation, sentence structure and presentation in their written work.

Mathematics

The overall quality of pupils' attainment in mathematics was good. There had been an improving trend over the past three years. Almost all pupils at P3 and most from P4 to P7 were achieving appropriate national levels. A few were achieving these levels earlier than might normally be expected. Pupils could conduct surveys effectively and could draw and interpret graphs accurately. At the middle and upper stages, they used simple databases and spreadsheets well to organise information. Most pupils demonstrated good knowledge of basic number facts, particularly at the early and middle stages. Many at P4 were impressively quick at working with relatively large numbers. Pupils were competent in working with money, measure and time at appropriate levels. Several did not know their multiplication number facts sufficiently well, which affected their ability to perform written calculations accurately. At the upper stages, a few were inaccurate in their work with decimals. Pupils at P7 could measure and name angles and highlight lines of symmetry, although a number were unsure of two- and three-dimensional shapes. At all stages, pupils worked well at solving problems.

5. How well are pupils supported?

The school's arrangements for ensuring the care and welfare of pupils were very effective. Staff had clear guidance on a broad range of pastoral issues and understood the school's procedures for child protection. Staff knew pupils very well and provided support which was sensitive to the physical, social and emotional needs of individuals. The school worked hard to ensure all pupils were included and was making sound progress in working with other agencies to support pupils and their families. Pupils felt safe and secure in the school and were clear about the procedures for dealing with cases of bullying. They felt very confident that they could approach staff if they needed help.

Most pupils were well supported in classes by appropriate tasks and resources. The school provided very well-planned additional support for pupils' learning. The deputy headteacher effectively co-ordinated the delivery of support to pupils. Teachers were aware of the range of pupils' needs and identified effectively those pupils requiring support. They ensured that parents were suitably involved. An area network support teacher offered high quality assistance in reviewing pupil progress and working with a range of pupils to support their learning. Senior managers, other teachers and learning assistants offered further flexible support. An early intervention teacher gave effective support at P1 to P4 to improve pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. A home-school link teacher worked well with parents. Where appropriate, staff prepared individualised educational programmes for pupils and ensured that pupils' progress was reviewed regularly.

6. How good is the environment for learning?

Aspect	Comment
Quality of accommodation and facilities	The accommodation was good, overall. Pupils' art work was very effectively displayed throughout the school. Most classrooms were spacious and well resourced. Additional rooms were well used to support a range of learning activities including computing and physical education. The accommodation provided good storage facilities. Building security arrangements were appropriate. However, the structural fabric of the building needed repair. There were some heating and ventilation problems. Playground areas were well supervised and provided ample space for pupils to play and relax.

Aspect	Comment
<p>Climate and relationships, expectations and promoting achievement and equality</p>	<p>The school had a very caring and welcoming atmosphere which was conducive to learning. Staff, pupils and visitors felt valued, safe and secure. Relationships between staff and pupils were very positive and pupils were friendly and courteous. Pupils, parents and staff were proud to be associated with the school. The quality of teamwork and morale among staff was very good. Teachers' high expectations of pupils' attainment and achievements were well met. The school provided many opportunities for religious observance through daily prayers, weekly assemblies and special masses which promoted a community of faith. Staff took care to involve all pupils in the life of the school and successfully promoted racial equality, tolerance and respect for others through their health and religious and moral education programmes. They gave very good attention to promoting success and equal access to the curriculum for all pupils and encouraged pupils' appreciation of diversity.</p>
<p>Partnership with parents and the community</p>	<p>The school had a very positive partnership with its supportive School Board which had actively sought parents' views on the proposed relocation of the school. The PTA provided very good support through fund-raising activities. Parents helped regularly with outings and in classes. Regular newsletters, annual pupil progress reports and a series of curriculum workshops kept them well informed about the work of the school. The school encouraged parents to support their children's learning and gave detailed, helpful guidance on how parents could assist with homework. It had recently piloted personal learning plans with a group of pupils and their parents. The school ensured that parents were suitably consulted on sensitive health issues such as personal relationships and sexual health. Links with the Church and community were close and productive. The school held concerts, fairs and fund raising events which enhanced the school's reputation in the local community. The school had close liaison with the local secondary school and associated primary schools, including working together on personal learning planning, health promotion activities and pupil council training.</p>

7. Improving the school

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

St Eunan's Primary School provided high quality education for its pupils within a very caring environment. Teachers and support staff were very successful in encouraging all pupils to develop positive attitudes to learning. Overall, pupils were attaining high standards, particularly in English language, and making very good progress in their social and personal development. The headteacher provided strong, purposeful leadership. She demonstrated a clear vision which was focused on raising pupils' attainment and ensuring continuous improvement within an inclusive environment for learning. She had the respect and confidence of her staff and promoted a strong sense of teamwork. She encouraged staff to take the lead in various curricular initiatives and they responded positively and enthusiastically to these staff development opportunities. The two deputy headteachers gave strong support to the headteacher. They fulfilled their remits very well and produced quality work. Senior managers formed a cohesive, supportive team and worked well with other staff in a team approach with a clear focus on school improvement. The principal teachers fulfilled their remits enthusiastically and very effectively. Staff valued their support and advice highly.

The school's approaches to monitoring and evaluating the quality of its work were thorough and effective. Senior managers monitored and evaluated learning and teaching using a wide range of procedures. This included providing teachers with feedback on their plans and making formal visits to classes. More focused sampling of pupils' work would be beneficial. The management team tracked pupils' attainment systematically and regularly discussed individual pupils' progress with teachers. As a result, staff set clear learning targets to help raise pupils' attainment. Procedures involved teachers in evaluating their own teaching which, although detailed, were not always sufficiently focused on the impact on pupils' learning. After the success of the recent pilot scheme, personal learning plans were being established to ensure all pupils were fully involved in evaluating their work and setting targets for their own learning. The school was very well placed to maintain a high level of pupils' attainment and achievement.

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:

- build on the best practice evident in the school, especially to consolidate aspects of pupils' learning in mathematics.

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 and carers. Within two years of the publication of this report the education authority, working with the school, will provide a progress report to parents and carers.

June Graham
HM Inspector

30 August 2005

Appendix 1 Indicators of quality

We judged the following to be very good

- Structure of the curriculum
- Pupils' attainment in English language
- Pastoral care
- Climate and relationships
- Expectations and promoting achievement
- Equality and fairness
- Partnership with parents, the School Board and the community
- Leadership

We judged the following to be good

- The teaching process
- Pupils' learning experiences
- Pupils' attainment in mathematics
- Meeting pupils' needs
- Accommodation and facilities
- Self-evaluation

We judged the following to be fair

- No aspects were found to be in this category

We judged the following to be unsatisfactory

- No aspects were found to be in this category

Appendix 2 Summary of questionnaire responses

Important features of responses from the various groups which received questionnaires are listed below.

<p>What pleased parents and carers most</p>	<p>What parents and carers would like to see improved</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children enjoyed being at school and were encouraged to work to the best of their ability. • Staff showed concern for children’s care and welfare and set high standards for pupils’ attainment. • The school had a good reputation in the community. • The school explained how they could support their children with homework well. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accommodation. • Consultation on the proposed relocation of the school.
<p>What pleased pupils most</p>	<p>What pupils would like to see improved</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school helped them to keep themselves safe and healthy. • Teachers explained things clearly and helped them when they were having difficulty. • Teachers listened to them and told them when they had done something well and how they could improve their learning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The behaviour of a few pupils.
<p>What pleased staff most</p>	<p>What staff would like to see improved</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All liked working in the school which was well led. • Teachers set high standards of attainment and pupils’ success was celebrated regularly. • Pupils received constructive feedback about their work. • Pupils were enthusiastic about learning and that there was mutual respect between staff and pupils. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There were no significant concerns.

How can you contact us?

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