

**Carleton Primary School
Fife Council**

19 February 2002

Contents

1.	Introduction	Page 1
2.	The school	1
3.	How well are pupils performing?	4
4.	How good is the curriculum?	5
5.	How good is learning and teaching?	7
6.	How well are pupils supported?	8
7.	How well is the school managed?	9
8.	How well does the school perform overall?	10
	Key strengths	
	Main points for action	
	Appendix	13-14
	Indicators of quality	
	Quality of lessons observed	
	How can you contact us?	15

Inspection of Standards and Quality in Carleton Primary School Fife Council

1. Introduction

Carleton Primary School was inspected in November 2001 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 how well pupils were performing, the effectiveness of the school and how well the school was managed.

HM Inspectors evaluated learning, teaching and attainment, examined pupils' work and interviewed staff and pupils. They assessed the school's processes for self-evaluation and development planning. There was a particular focus on attainment in English language, mathematics, and social subjects within environmental studies.

Members of the inspection team analysed responses to questionnaires issued to a sample of parents. A member of the inspection team also met the chairperson of the School Board, representatives of the parent-teacher association (PTA), other parents and pupils.

2. The school

The school serves the Woodside area of Glenrothes. At the time of the inspection the roll was 370 including about 100 pupils who attended as a result of placing requests.

Parents' views

Just over 80% of the sample of parents responded to the questionnaire. Those who did were very satisfied with the work of the school.

All or almost all thought that:

- children enjoyed being at school, found class work stimulating and challenging and were treated fairly;
- the school provided helpful information to parents about children's progress and parents' evenings were informative;
- staff made them welcome in the school and showed a concern for the care and welfare of their child; and
- the school had a good reputation in the community, was well led and the building was kept in good order.

Ethos

The school had a very good ethos. Staff and pupils identified with their school, were proud of it and made visitors very welcome. The management team and most teachers had appropriate expectations of pupils' learning and behaviour. Pupils were courteous, helpful and generally well behaved. Staff morale was high and relationships between staff and pupils were very good. Pupils had access to a range of successful extra-curricular activities. Regular assemblies, often led by the chaplain, provided suitable opportunities for religious observance and to celebrate success. Pupils' attendance was in line with the national average.

School and community

The school had established very good relationships with parents, other schools, educational support services and had extensive links with the wider community.

- The School Board provided very good support for the school.

- The PTA and other parents gave very good assistance by helping in the school and with outings, fundraising and after-school activities.
- Members of the local business community were actively involved in the life and work of the school.
- Communication with parents was very good. Regular newsletters, curriculum evenings and information boards provided a wide range of information. Two parents' evenings and an annual written report ensured parents had good information about their children's progress.
- Links with the local secondary school and nursery school were very good.
- Liaison with Fife Health Promotion, the emergency services and health board staff was very good.

Accommodation

The accommodation was very good. It was warm, clean and well maintained. A security system was in place and used well. There was a large assembly hall which was also used as a dining area, and a gym hall. Classrooms were bright and of a good size. Children's work was attractively displayed. Space was used well to store the wide range of resources. The extensive outdoor areas provided very good tarmac and grassy play areas for all pupils. Pupils had access to very good play equipment.

Staffing and resources

The school was very well staffed. Visiting teachers of music, physical education, drama and art and design taught regularly in the school. Clerical, auxiliary and ancillary staff provided very valuable assistance for teachers and pupils.

Resource provision for English language, mathematics, environmental studies and information and communications technology (ICT) was very good.

Resources were well organised and easily accessed by staff. The management team should ensure that the wide range of high quality materials available to staff was used more effectively, particularly ICT.

The headteacher had made innovative use of the school's devolved budget to enhance further the provision of resources and to support staff and curriculum development.

3. How well are pupils performing?

English language

In English language, the overall quality of attainment was good. Most pupils coped well with their classwork but at times this lacked appropriate challenge. Pupils in P1 and P2 were making good progress in developing early literacy skills. Most pupils at P3 were attaining appropriate national levels in *listening, talking, reading, and writing*. At P7, the majority of pupils were achieving appropriate levels. Most pupils listened attentively and responded well to instructions and questions. They talked confidently about their classwork and were able to express opinions about texts. Most pupils were able to read fluently. At P4 to P7, pupils were not sufficiently skilled in reflecting on how authors created meaning and effect. Pupils' skills in writing at length and for a range of purposes and audiences needed further development. Across the school pupils' skills in spelling, handwriting and presentation were good.

Mathematics

The overall quality of attainment in mathematics was good. In P1 and P2 pupils were making very good progress in developing their early numeracy skills. At P3, most were attaining appropriate national levels in *number, money and measurement, shape, position and movement, and information handling*. At P7, the majority of pupils were attaining appropriate standards. Pupils coped well with their classwork but some were

capable of responding to more demanding tasks. Pupils were working hard to improve their skills in mental calculation and most coped well with written tasks. However, throughout the school, some needed to improve their accurate recall of basic number facts. At P3 and P7, pupils had a good knowledge of two- and three-dimensional shapes and could discuss their properties. In information handling, most pupils read graphs confidently. Their skills in using computers to organise and display data were not well developed. In *problem-solving and enquiry*, pupils needed to develop their skills in identifying strategies to be used for solving problems.

Social subjects

In social subjects, the overall quality of attainment was good. Most pupils demonstrated good knowledge and understanding of topics they had studied. At P5, pupils had a good grasp of aspects of Viking history and the geography of their voyages. At P7, pupils demonstrated good knowledge and understanding of aspects of Europe, including the influence of landscape and climate on tourism and lifestyles in different countries. At all stages however, pupils' awareness of features of people and society were generally more variable than their understanding of aspects of history and geography they had studied. Pupils' skills in investigating and evaluating evidence were developing appropriately in some topics but overall pupils needed to be more clearly aware of these aspects of the social subjects.

4. How good is the curriculum?

The school provided a broad curriculum for its pupils in line with national advice. At P6 and P7, one class at each stage learned French and the other learned German.

English language

The programme for English language was good overall. It provided broad coverage of listening, talking, reading

and writing and included systematic attention to the teaching of handwriting and spelling. In P1 and P2, teachers gave good attention to the development of pupils' early literacy skills. Aspects of the reading programme needed to be developed further, particularly pupils' understanding of how authors created meaning and effect. The school should now implement fully the plans to improve writing and ensure more frequent opportunities for pupils to write at length and for a wider variety of purposes.

Mathematics

Overall, the mathematics programme was good and covered all the areas recommended in national advice. Throughout the school staff provided pupils with opportunities to develop their skills in mental and written calculation. Pupils had appropriate opportunities to develop their understanding of shape. They needed more experience of using computers to record information in spreadsheets and databases. The programme for problem solving and enquiry provided pupils with experience of solving problems but needed to give closer attention to the systematic development of their ability to identify and use a range of strategies.

Social subjects

The social subjects programme was good overall and provided generally well balanced coverage of aspects of history and geography. At most stages, the programme required more emphasis on people in society. Further attention also required to be given to clarifying the specific focus of social subjects topics to ensure that appropriate progression in learning was achieved in each aspect. Some topics gave very good attention to the development of pupils' skills in planning, collecting and evaluating evidence. However, this aspect of pupils' learning generally needed increased emphasis.

Environmental studies

The environmental studies programme was good overall. It provided broad coverage of social subjects, science and technology through a wide and well considered range of topics. Some very good steps were being taken by

teachers to relate pupils' studies to the local and wider environment. However, further attention required to be given to improving the balance and sequencing of topics at some stages and to the overall progression in pupils' learning as they moved through the school. The environmental studies programme was already being reviewed in the light of revised national guidelines.

5. How good is learning and teaching?

The overall quality of learning and teaching was good. Most of the lessons seen were good or very good. There were no major weaknesses in any lessons. Further information about lesson evaluations is provided in the appendix.

- The quality of teachers' planning was good overall. However, plans needed a clear focus on what pupils were expected to learn and how this would be assessed to ensure an appropriate progression in pupils' learning.
- Most teachers gave clear explanations and instructions and made good use of questions. They needed to ensure that activities were sufficiently demanding and that the pace of learning was appropriate to meet the needs of all pupils.
- Most pupils were highly motivated and worked well without close supervision.
- Homework was set regularly and marked.
- Teachers assessed pupils' work regularly and made appropriate use of national tests in English language and mathematics. In environmental studies, assessment was at an early stage of development. Overall, teachers needed to make better use of

assessment information to monitor pupils' progress and plan the next steps in their learning.

6. How well are pupils supported?

Care and welfare	Teaching and non-teaching staff created a very caring and inclusive environment for pupils. Pupils were known well as individuals and their families were welcome in the school. Staff provided very high levels of care and ensured that pupils' welfare needs were met sensitively and effectively. The education authority's child protection policy was in place and used appropriately. The school successfully encouraged very good relationships and good behaviour.
Personal and social development	The programme for personal and social development was very good. Staff promoted pupils' personal and social development through a range of whole school, classroom and extra-curricular activities. The house system was used effectively to promote good behaviour and effort. The Pupil Council gave classroom representatives very good opportunities to participate in making decisions about the life of the school. Senior pupils had a number of duties around the school and fulfilled their responsibilities very well. There were very good opportunities for all pupils to apply their social skills on regular visits to places of interest. Pupils at P6 and P7 took part in residential visits. The health education programme was good. Parents had been consulted about the school's approach to education about personal relationships and substance misuse.
Support for learning	The school's arrangements to support pupils who needed additional help with their learning were very good. The support for learning teacher provided very good advice and support for staff and pupils. She taught alongside teachers in classrooms and worked effectively with individuals or small groups of pupils in the learning

support base. Time was planned carefully to enable her to consult regularly with staff to assess and plan to meet the needs of individual pupils. She advised teachers on matters relating to meeting individual needs and helped prepare appropriate individualised educational programmes for pupils with learning difficulties. Parents were consulted about their child's programme. The headteacher liaised very closely with the support for learning teacher and shared in the process of monitoring pupils' progress. Support Assistants provided very good support for their pupils. The school implemented special educational needs legislation very carefully.

7. How well is the school managed?

Overall management and leadership

The headteacher provided very good leadership and direction for the school. She had successfully promoted strong staff team work and established very good relationships with staff, pupils and parents. She communicated very effectively with staff and in her four years as headteacher had managed change very well. Her careful attention to the needs of individual pupils had promoted a caring and inclusive environment for all pupils. She was actively involved in all aspects of the work of the school and taught regularly in classrooms.

The depute and assistant headteacher provided very good support for the headteacher, and for staff and pupils. Their remits made appropriate use of their strengths and interests. They did not have a full-time class commitment and used their time effectively to support teachers and pupils in classrooms and to undertake management duties.

The two senior teachers were very hardworking and fulfilled their remits very well.

The school's aims were comprehensive and made appropriate reference to key aspects of the work of the school. They provided a very good basis for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of its work.

Staff development and review

Staff development was planned carefully and matched well to the needs of individual teachers and the school development plan. Teachers made good use of education authority staff development courses and of school based training. Staff found the process of staff review supportive and a very positive experience.

School development planning

The school's development plan was very good. It set out appropriate priorities, tasks, timescales and success criteria. The management team should ensure that success criteria identify more clearly the impact initiatives will have on improving pupils' learning. Good progress had been made in implementing the development plan.

Approaches to improving quality

The headteacher, depute and assistant headteachers undertook an extensive programme of monitoring and evaluation which covered all aspects of the work of the school. They monitored forward plans through discussions with teachers and provided written comment, sampled pupils' work, taught regularly in classrooms and provided feedback to staff, and tracked the attainment of pupils. They now needed to focus more rigorously on monitoring programmes and patterns of attainment. The school had used questionnaires recently to survey the views of parents, pupils and staff.

8. How well does the school perform overall?

Overall, the school provided a good standard of education for its pupils. The headteacher and staff were committed to improving further the quality of learning and teaching and to raising attainment. They knew the

children well and had created an inclusive learning environment where pupils worked calmly on their tasks and were treated fairly. The school should build on its many strengths and now focus more specifically on improving the quality of its programmes and raising further the attainment of all its pupils.

Key strengths

- The purposeful leadership of the headteacher in improving provision and the significant contributions to the management of the school by the promoted staff.
- The school's very positive ethos and the pleasant and responsible attitude of pupils.
- The school's extensive programme for monitoring its work and the staff teamwork involved in identifying priorities for inclusion in the school development plan.
- The quality of support for pupils with learning difficulties and the positive approach to the inclusion of pupils with significant learning difficulties.
- The headteacher's careful management of the school's devolved budget to provide a wide range of high quality resources for learning and teaching.
- The relationships with the School Board, the PTA, other parents and the wider community.

Main points for action

The school and education authority should act on the following recommendations.

- Planning should be streamlined and focused more specifically on what pupils will learn. Plans should be linked clearly to the assessment of pupils' progress.

- Aspects of the programmes for English language, mathematics and environmental studies should be adjusted in line with this report to establish a clearer progression for all pupils.
- Staff should ensure greater pace and challenge for pupils, particularly the more able.
- The school should make more effective use of the wide range of valuable information gathered through monitoring to evaluate patterns of attainment and raise attainment further.

HM Inspectors will return between one and two years after the publication of this report to assess progress in meeting these recommendations. The school and education authority have been asked to prepare an action plan indicating how they will address the main points for action in the report and to share that plan with parents.

Christine Roebuck
HM Inspector
on behalf of HM Chief Inspector
Eastern Division

19 February 2002

See Performance Indicator data overleaf.

Appendix

Indicators of quality

We judged the following to be *very good*

- The school's ethos
- Communication with parents
- Partnership with parents and the School Board
- Provision of accommodation and facilities
- Provision of staff
- Provision of materials and equipment
- The school's management of devolved finances
- The structure of the curriculum
- Effectiveness of the learning support
- Implementation of Special Educational Needs legislation
- Effectiveness of leadership of the school
- Effectiveness of promoted staff and senior teachers
- The school's approach to evaluating its own work
- The school development plan
- The school's arrangements for development and review of its staff

We judged the following to be *good*

- Quality of courses or programmes
- Quality of teachers' planning
- Quality of the teaching process
- Quality of pupils' learning
- Matching the teaching process to pupils' needs and experience
- Using assessment to guide the teaching process
- Implementing the school development plan

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

Quality of lessons observed

HMI also evaluated the quality of the lessons observed. The overall quality of lessons was very good in 23% of cases, good in 62% and fair in 15%. There were no unsatisfactory lessons.

How can you contact us?

Copies of this report have been sent to the headteacher and school staff, the Head of Education, local councillors and appropriate Members of the Scottish Parliament. Subject to availability, further copies may be obtained free of charge from the office at the address below or by telephoning 0131 244 8076. Copies are also available on our web site: www.scotland.gov.uk/hmie

Should you wish to comment on or make a complaint about any aspect of the inspection or about this report, you should write in the first instance to Dr Gill Robinson, HMCI whose address is given below. If you are unhappy with the response, you will be told in writing what further steps you may take.

HM Inspectorate of Education
Saughton House
Broomhouse Drive
EDINBURGH
EH11 3XD

Crown Copyright 2002

Scottish Executive

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.