



**St Andrew's School
and Nursery Class
Fraserburgh
Aberdeenshire Council
8 December 2009**

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

St Andrew's School is a non-denominational school with a nursery class and a developmental nursery class for children who require additional support in their learning. It serves an area of Fraserburgh. The roll was 371, including 49 in the nursery and four in the developmental nursery when the inspection was carried out in September 2009. Children's attendance was in line with the national average in 2007/2008. The headteacher was also the acting headteacher of Westfield School in Fraserburgh.

2. Particular strengths of the school

- Children's learning through play in the nursery class.
- Staff who are committed to the welfare of children.
- Work with outside agencies to support children and their families.

3. How well do children learn and achieve?

Learning and achievement

In the nursery class, children are actively involved in their learning through play. They are beginning to be more involved in planning their learning. In the developmental nursery class, children make appropriate choices in their learning. In primary classes, the majority of children are motivated and active in their learning especially when lessons are stimulating. Children work well together when given the opportunity. However, there are insufficient opportunities for children to take responsibility for and make choices in their learning. Children are developing an awareness of their strengths as learners but are not always clear about their next steps in learning. They do not use their information and communications technology (ICT) skills sufficiently well across a range of curricular areas. Children feel safe and believe that the school helps them to stay healthy.

In the nursery class, children are gaining confidence and success in all aspects of their learning. They are making good progress in developing investigative skills in early science. Children at the primary stages are developing a good knowledge of Scottish heritage. At P7, children have developed their confidence and are increasing their knowledge of life during the war as a result of their visits to a local care home. Children from P3 to P7 are taking responsibility as members of the pupil council. Children participate in a range of fundraising

activities for charities. There is scope to increase opportunities for children to take part in out-of-school activities.

In the nursery class, the majority of children talk well with each other about their chosen tasks. Most children listen to and carry out simple instructions, for example, when playing a game. Children in the developmental nursery enjoy participating in a range of interesting activities with support from staff. In the primary classes, levels of attainment in reading and writing have shown signs of improvement recently. Attainment levels in mathematics have varied over recent years. Most children achieve appropriate national levels of attainment in reading and the majority achieve these in writing and mathematics. In English language, most children listen well and talk confidently with each other in groups. Children at the early stages are making good progress in developing their language skills. By P7, the majority of children are able to describe books they have read and enjoyed but they are not confident in describing different types of writing. Across the classes, children write for a variety of purposes. In mathematics, a number of children are not able to carry out mental calculations quickly. At the early stages, children are developing their knowledge of pattern. Children from P4 to P7 are not confident in their knowledge of two and three-dimensional shapes. At P5, most children are able to collect and record information in bar graphs using ICT.

Curriculum and meeting learning needs

In the nursery class, staff adapt the curriculum in response to children's interests and their individual needs. They ensure that children have opportunities to develop their numeracy skills in a variety of play situations and have appropriate opportunities to be creative. The use of ICT to support children's learning in the nursery is not yet well developed. Staff do not provide enough opportunities for children to learn outdoors. In the developmental nursery, there is a need to review planning in order to ensure activities meet the needs of all children. In the primary classes, teachers have structured programmes in place for the main areas of the curriculum. A few teachers have worked effectively to develop the curriculum in line with

Curriculum for Excellence. Staff are at the early stages of implementing these developments. Children need more opportunities to use their ICT skills across a range of curricular areas. Staff make good use of visitors and visits to enhance children's learning. Children experience two hours of good quality physical education each week. The education authority has appropriate plans in place to extend the length of the school day for younger children.

The learning needs of children in the nursery and primary classes are not yet being met fully. Staff in the nursery classes have positive relationships with children and their families. They identify those children requiring additional support with their learning at an early stage. There are individualised educational programmes (IEPs) in place for children who need support. As yet, targets in IEPs are not purposeful or reviewed often enough to ensure that children make appropriate progress. Across the primary stages, staff need to clarify procedures for identifying and supporting children's needs. Teachers recognise that children for whom English is an additional language require more planned support. Support for individuals and groups of children who require help is not organised well enough. When teaching is interesting and motivating, children respond positively. However, many of the tasks and activities which children undertake in the classroom are too routine in nature. At a few stages, children are beginning to identify personal targets for their learning at school and at home.

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

The Parent Council works very well with the school and is keen to support the development of interactive technology in the school. They have used social events to share developments with parents and to seek their views in an informal way. Parents support children's learning, for example, through helping with mathematics activities at the early stages. The school works well with a number of agencies such as psychological services, social work and the Youth Strategy

Agency to support vulnerable children. A home-link worker provides effective support to families when children are absent from school. There are a high number of absences due to families taking holidays during term time. Parents are given the opportunity to comment on the school improvement plan and view materials used to teach the sensitive aspects of health education. Teachers keep parents informed about their children's progress through helpful meetings and written reports. There are effective arrangements in place to support children moving from home to pre-school, nursery to P1 and from P7 to Fraserburgh Academy. The school deals effectively with concerns and complaints.

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

Older children respond well to opportunities to take responsibilities, for example, as buddies to younger children. Members of the pupil council influence aspects of the life of the school and are proud of the way in which they have promoted healthy eating. Across the stages, children do not have enough opportunities to discuss and be involved in ways to make their school better. Staff in the nursery and primary classes are not involved sufficiently in identifying areas for development. Across the school, teachers use different ways to monitor children's progress. They now need to review and improve these approaches to ensure that children progress at a suitable rate as they move through the school. Teachers take part in learning circles with colleagues from other establishments. They have found these meetings valuable in helping them to improve aspects of their classroom practice. The headteacher and depute headteachers have visited classes and monitored children's work. They have provided staff with feedback to help them improve their practice. This now needs to be done in a more systematic way. Staff are not yet fully involved in self-evaluation. As a result, there has not been a sustained focus on improving the achievements of all learners.

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

Overall, staff have positive relationships with children. On a few occasions, the behaviour of one or two children disrupts learning. Staff use appropriate strategies to deal with these instances of misbehaviour. Children's achievements are celebrated at regular assemblies. They are awarded certificates for good behaviour and to encourage attendance. Staff now need to raise their expectations of what children can achieve in class. Children are developing an understanding of other faiths and beliefs through the religious and moral education programme. They feel that there is an adult they can speak to if they have a concern. Staff are clear about the school's child protection procedures.

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

The headteacher has a clear understanding of what is required to improve the work of the school. Staff now need to work together to create a shared vision in order to successfully implement planned improvements. The depute headteachers have developed aspects of the work of the school, for example, technology and the early years curriculum. Their roles and responsibilities should be clearly defined and shared with all staff. Self-evaluation has not been effective and senior staff are now discussing ways of bringing about change. The school and education authority require to work very closely together to ensure that identified priorities for improvements are addressed effectively.

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.

- Identify and support all children who need help with their learning.
- Introduce a more systematic approach to involving children, staff and parents in improving their school.
- Improve children's skills and levels of attainment in writing and mathematics.
- Develop the curriculum in line with *Curriculum for Excellence* in order to ensure continuity and progression in learning.
- Ensure that all staff who have responsibility for lifting and handling children receive appropriate training.

At the recent Care Commission inspection of the nursery class there were no requirements. In addition, five recommendations were made and the school is addressing these.

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 St Andrew's School and Nursery Class.

Primary school

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

Nursery class

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

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

The curriculum	satisfactory
Improvement through self-evaluation	weak

HM Inspector: Jacqueline Horsburgh
8 December 2009

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 HMIEenquiries@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 2009
HM Inspectorate of Education