



**Ladyton Primary School
Bonhill
West Dunbartonshire
23 March 2010**

HM Inspectorate of Education (HMI) 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.

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.

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1. The school

Ladyton Primary School is a non-denominational school. It serves the Ladyton, Nobleston, O'Hare and Redburn Estates areas in Bonhill. The roll was 101 when the inspection was carried out in February 2010. Children's attendance was in line with the national average in 2007/2008.

2. Particular strengths of the school

- Children's positive attitudes to learning and to working with others.
- Promotion of children's personal and social development.
- Engagement of staff in the life of the school.
- The headteacher's success in developing a supportive work environment for children and staff.

3. How well do children learn and achieve?

Learning and achievement

Children have positive attitudes to learning. They enjoy being actively involved in their learning experiences and focus well on tasks and activities. Children work well together. They discuss issues and help each other to find solutions. Most can work independently. They are beginning to take responsibility for evaluating their performance in some areas of work. Teachers should build on this good practice and encourage children to identify how to improve their work and be clear about what they need to do next. Children feel safe, happy and valued in school. They appreciate having their say about what happens in school. They contribute positively to school life.

Children are making good progress in their personal and social development. They are gaining confidence and self-esteem. They show care and concern for others and a growing awareness of their responsibilities in the wider community. They understand the importance of healthy lifestyles and take part in a range of physical activities. Most children have a good awareness of enterprise through making and selling items for school events, including a fair-trade coffee afternoon. Through work in the school garden and activities

linked to Eco-Schools Scotland, they are developing understanding of taking care of the environment.

Over the past three years, a majority of children have achieved national levels in reading, writing and mathematics. Standards of attainment are now rising slowly. Children at P1 to P3 are making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. At P4 to P7, children's progress is variable. At all stages, children are developing appropriate skills in listening and talking in different situations. They are gaining confidence in reading with fluency and understanding. Children can write different types of texts. They need to develop skills in writing longer pieces of text and improve spelling and punctuation. In mathematics, children at all stages can use number processes to solve problems. In P1 and P2, children can create number sequences and order numbers. At P7, children can work with and construct decimal fractions. Across the school, most children have suitable knowledge of 2D shapes and 3D objects. At P3, children can recognise and create symmetrical shapes and patterns. Children need to develop further their understanding of how to apply mathematical skills in real-life situations.

Curriculum and meeting learning needs

The curriculum provides children with a broad and balanced set of learning experiences. Staff are making steady progress in developing the curriculum, taking account of *Curriculum for Excellence*. In doing so, the school is giving good attention to developing health and wellbeing. All children receive two hours of quality physical education each week. They take part in learning experiences outdoors as part of a Forest Schools project and in developing the school grounds. In other areas of the curriculum, staff are starting to provide children with more relevant and enjoyable contexts for learning. In most classes, teachers are helping children to see the links across curricular areas. They are focusing appropriately on developing children's literacy skills across the curriculum. The school has effective arrangements in place to support children coming into school from nursery and those moving on to secondary education.

Most teachers provide learning activities that match appropriately to children's levels of ability. Overall, the pace of learning is slow and children need a higher level of challenge to maximise their progress. Learning assistants provide valuable support to individuals and groups. The school has suitable arrangements for identifying and reviewing children's additional support needs. Children and parents are not yet fully involved in setting and reviewing learning targets in children's individualised educational programmes. Children experiencing difficulties in aspects of their learning receive a variety of additional support. The school should review how best to support children and provide continuity and relevance in learning. Staff know children well and are alert to the barriers to learning arising from family circumstances and social and emotional factors. They ensure that children who are looked-after are well-supported.

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

Parents feel welcome in school and are regularly involved in school life as parents helpers. Staff use a range of approaches to keep parents informed about key events in school life. They seek parents' views on the sensitive parts of the school's health and relationships programme. There is scope to do more to encourage parents to be actively involved in supporting their children's learning. Staff from other agencies, including network support, educational psychological services, health and social work, work well with school staff to help support children and their families. A family support officer has given valuable assistance to the school to address children's attendance problems. An Active Schools Coordinator contributes significantly to promoting children's physical wellbeing. The school maintains productive partnerships with other educational establishments to support improvements to learning and teaching.

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

Staff are committed to improving the quality of the school's work. They feel fully involved in identifying the school's priorities for improvement. Staff reflect regularly on classroom practice. They have started to observe learning and teaching in each other's classrooms, to share good practice and exchange ideas. The headteacher reviews learning and teaching through discussions with teachers about their plans for the next term. She visits classes regularly to monitor the quality of learners' experiences. The headteacher and staff need to be more rigorous in implementing the school's arrangements for tracking children's progress. The school regularly seeks children's views on aspects of their learning experiences. Children's views have contributed to recent developments in homework, tuck shop and decisions on priorities for improvement. The school also involves parents in evaluating the quality of the school's work. Staff make appropriate use of the information received to plan for improvements. Recent improvements have resulted in more active and enjoyable learning experiences for all learners.

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

The school has a strong sense of community. The headteacher plays a key role in fostering a positive and supportive climate. Staff show high levels of care and concern for the children and address their physical, emotional and social needs sensitively and effectively. They take part in appropriate training and understand their responsibilities in relation to child protection issues. The school has positive and effective approaches to promoting healthy living. Staff have appropriate expectations for children's attendance and behaviour. They do not always have sufficiently high expectations of children's achievements. Over the past two years children's behaviour has improved. There are fewer exclusions and children respond well to the school's positive and friendly atmosphere. Children feel that they are treated fairly and equally. The school chaplain visits the school

regularly and contributes significantly to the school's arrangements for religious observance.

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

Following a period of significant staff turnover, the headteacher is establishing a shared sense of common purpose. Together, with the principal teacher and staff, she has developed a strong sense of teamwork. Staff share a sense of responsibility and are beginning to work well together to bring about improvements to learning and teaching. The headteacher should continue to play a strong role in driving forward actions and in challenging and supporting staff to raise standards further.

8. What happens next?

We are confident that, with support from the education authority, the school will be able to make the necessary improvements in light of the inspection findings. As a result, we will make no more visits in connection with this inspection. The school and the education authority will inform parents about the school's progress in improving the quality of education. Our District Inspector will maintain contact with the education authority to monitor improvements in learners' achievement.

We have agreed the following areas for improvement with the school and education authority.

- Raise attainment.
- Develop the curriculum to provide children with more meaningful and relevant learning experiences.
- Provide children with high quality challenge and support to maximise their progress.

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 Ladyton Primary School.

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

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

The curriculum	good
Improvement through self-evaluation	good

HM Inspector: Norma Wright
23 March 2010

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

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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.

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