

**Our Holy Redeemer's  
Primary School  
Clydebank  
West Dunbartonshire Council  
13 June 2006**

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## **1. Background**

Our Holy Redeemer's Primary School was inspected in March 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, 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<sup>1</sup>.

The school serves the Whitecrook area of Clydebank. At the time of the inspection the roll was 279. The proportion of pupils who were entitled to free school meals was well above the national average. Pupils' attendance was below the national average.

## **2. Key strengths**

HM Inspectors identified the following key strengths.

- Confident, hard-working pupils and their sense of identity and pride in the school.
- The broad range of learning experiences, including out-of-school activities.
- Approaches to meeting the requirements of pupils with additional support needs.
- The contribution of all staff to maintaining the positive learning environment and their attention to pupils' pastoral care.
- The leadership of the headteacher.

## **3. What are the views of parents, 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 were very pleased with the education and support provided by the school. They considered that staff were approachable and that the headteacher dealt with issues

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<sup>1</sup> Throughout this report, the term 'parents' should be taken to include foster carers, residential care staff and carers who are relatives or friends



promptly. All parents thought that teachers set high standards for pupils' attainment and that the school had a good reputation in the community. They appreciated the wide range of activities organised outwith the school day available to their children. A few parents felt that there was scope to improve procedures for dealing with inappropriate behaviour. They felt that newsletters should be issued more regularly. The pupils were proud of their school and felt the teachers were caring and supportive. They appreciated opportunities to take part in a range of after school activities such as the drama club. Pupils particularly enjoyed the range of food on offer at lunch time. A significant number spoke very positively about the breakfast club. Staff liked working in the school. They were positive about the leadership of the headteacher and the support they received from senior managers. Teachers were pleased by the positive way in which pupils responded to learning opportunities in school. They considered that they worked well as a team to improve pupils' experiences.

#### **4. How good are learning, teaching and achievement?**

##### **Pupils' learning experiences and achievements**

The school provided a good curriculum. Pupils had a suitable range of broad and balanced learning experiences. Teachers allocated additional time to develop pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. These measures had been effective in helping to raise attainment, most notably in numeracy and writing skills. At all stages, pupils had opportunities to use information and communications technology (ICT) to support their learning in various curricular areas. There was scope to make more effective use of ICT within classes to support aspects of learning and teaching in English language and mathematics. The quality of teaching was good. Teachers made very good use of questioning and shared learning targets well with pupils. There were examples of very good interactive teaching. Teachers were making a good start in the use of assessment to give pupils precise feedback on their progress and to help them improve their work. In most classes there was an appropriate pace of learning and pupils were suitably challenged. However, in a few instances tasks were not sufficiently differentiated. Teachers provided homework tasks which were well-matched to pupils' ability and offered appropriate challenge.

The quality of learning was good. Most pupils had positive attitudes to learning and settled quickly to work. They responded well to teachers' questioning. At the early stages, pupils benefited from good opportunities to be active in their learning. At the middle and upper stages, pupils made good use of opportunities to discuss ideas with others. For example, pupils at P5 worked well together when using coordinates to identify locations in an atlas. They worked collaboratively in pairs and groups during science and language activities. At P6, pupils were able to predict outcomes of scientific experiments and to use evidence to justify their conclusions. Pupils were aware of their learning targets in mathematics and English language and were very clear about what they had to do to improve their learning. However, across the school, pupils had insufficient opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning.

Pupils were achieving success across the curriculum. In health education, they could describe clearly the importance of strength, stamina and suppleness in personal fitness. Pupils were acquiring skills in citizenship, for example through visits to the Scottish



Parliament. Across the school pupils were involved in various enterprise activities including the successful school fete. They took responsibility for aspects of the life of the school through their participation in the pupil council. At P6, pupils had trained as playground buddies, and those at P7 gave very good support to help younger pupils with reading activities. Pupils had been involved in raising funds for a variety of charities including the Red Cross and St. Margaret's Hospice. They took part enthusiastically in a wide range of out-of-school activities including Irish dancing, ICT, athletics and a healthy eating group. A significant number of pupils were participating enthusiastically in preparations for a drama production. Pupils were involved in producing props and using ICT to design programmes as well as performing.

### **English language**

The overall quality of English language was good. Standards of attainment in writing, particularly at the early stages, were improving. Most pupils were achieving appropriate national levels of attainment in reading and writing. A significant number of pupils were attaining these levels earlier than might normally be expected. Pupils who required additional support with aspects of language were making very good progress towards meeting individual targets. Most pupils spoke clearly to adults and to each other about a range of topics. They listened attentively in class and responded enthusiastically to teachers' explanations and instructions. At the early stages, pupils chose their favourite passages from their personal reading books and competently read them aloud. At the upper stages, most pupils did not read regularly for pleasure and were not able to talk knowledgeably about different kinds of texts. They wrote well for a wide range of purposes and audiences. For example, at P4/5 when writing a letter to a designer about the jewellery they had produced as part of their Viking project.

### **Mathematics**

The overall quality of pupils' attainment was very good. Standards of attainment had improved steadily. At all stages, most pupils were attaining appropriate national levels. At a number of stages a significant number of pupils were attaining these standards earlier than could be expected. Those pupils who had not attained appropriate national levels were making suitable progress with their class work. They showed good understanding of number processes and were competent in handling mental calculations. At P1 and P2, all pupils were making very good progress with all aspects of number. At P3, pupils were developing good skills in mental mathematics. By P7, higher attaining pupils were confident in all aspects of number, money and measurement, including fractions. They showed good understanding of two- and three-dimensional shapes. Across the school, pupils could identify appropriate strategies and were able to apply these with confidence to find solutions to mathematical problems. Pupils used ICT effectively to support most areas of mathematics. However, they were not yet competent in using computers to produce databases and spreadsheets.



## 5. How well are pupils supported

The quality of pastoral care was very good. Staff placed a high priority on pupils' care and welfare and were sensitive to their physical, social and emotional needs. Appropriate child protection procedures were in place and arrangements had been made to ensure that all staff were appropriately trained. Staff worked hard to help families ensure pupils' regular attendance at school. Pupils felt safe in school and were confident that they could discuss any concerns with staff. Staff used a wide range of strategies to recognise and reward good behaviour. The school was promoting healthy living through a range of health and fitness activities, including a supported study healthy eating initiative. It had well-planned programmes to support pupils as they moved from nursery to P1 and from P7 to secondary school.

The school had very good approaches for supporting pupils experiencing difficulties with aspects of learning. Teachers took good account of prior learning when planning work for groups and individuals. Learning assistants made an important contribution to the quality of pupils' learning experiences, including well-judged assistance for pupils with additional support needs. Pupils at the early stages benefited from additional support aimed at promoting their literacy and numeracy skills. Teachers and visiting specialists worked well together to plan and deliver a broad range of additional activities to meet the specific needs of individuals. Visiting teachers from the area network team, and for the hearing impaired, provided high quality support to pupils and valuable advice to staff. Pupils with individualised educational programmes were making good progress towards achieving the clear and appropriate learning targets set for them.

## 6. How good is the environment for learning?

Aspect	Comment
Quality of accommodation and facilities	The quality of accommodation and facilities was good. Classrooms provided bright and welcoming learning environments. Pupils' work was attractively displayed throughout the school. Staff made very good use of open areas for ICT, technology and play activities. Pupils' playground experiences were enhanced through painted games on the hard surface and picnic benches. Resources were well organised. Staff made good use of the main hall for assemblies, performances, physical education and a variety of out of school activities. The school had appropriate security measures in place. Fire procedures were well established and documented. Access to certain parts of the building was difficult for users with disabilities. However, there was a suitable access strategy in place which could be implemented when required.



Aspect	Comment
Climate and relationships, expectations and promoting achievement and equality	<p>The atmosphere in the school was very friendly and welcoming. Pupils and staff identified strongly with the school and were proud to be associated with it. Relationships between staff and pupils were very good and they treated each other with respect. Pupils were courteous and responded well to the school's high expectation of behaviour and attainment. There were well-established approaches to reward good behaviour and recognise achievement. Regular assemblies provided opportunities for religious observance and to celebrate success. Pupils were involved in decision-making through their involvement in the school council. The school successfully promoted a sense of equality and fairness. Very effective approaches were in place to promote racial equality and to help pupils recognise and tackle discrimination. These included a comprehensive programme of activities in the upper school to promote anti-sectarianism.</p>
Partnership with parents and the community	<p>The school had developed strong partnerships with parents. Parents received good quality information about the work of the school through parents' meetings and informative newsletters. They were kept well informed about their children's progress through written reports and regular information about their children's attainment. Parents had been given good opportunities to comment on the quality of the school's work. They also had appropriate opportunities to view and discuss materials used in educating pupils about drugs and the sensitive aspects of health education. Parent helpers and members of the community supported aspects of the school's work, including the development of the school garden. The School Board and PTA were very supportive of the school. The school had close links with the church. The school chaplain played a regular and important part in the life of the school. Partner agencies assisted staff in providing a wide range of after-school activities.</p>

## 7. Improving the school

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

Our Holy Redeemer's Primary School provided a happy and purposeful learning environment in which pupils achieved good and improving standards of attainment. Staff were strongly committed to meeting pupils' needs and provided them with a broad curriculum. Pupils were making very good progress in their personal and social development and, overall, were confident, enthusiastic learners. The strong sense of



community and encouragement to learn were contributing significantly to the success the school enjoyed and its continuing capacity to improve.

The headteacher had established very positive relationships with parents, staff and pupils. During her time in post, she had provided strong leadership to bring about significant improvements to the quality of provision. She had developed a strong sense of teamwork and staff at all levels felt involved and very well supported. The deputy headteachers had clear remits and provided a good level of support. Promoted staff had developed aspects of the language programme effectively and this had resulted in an improvement in attainment. Aspects of ICT had also been developed but, as yet, this had not resulted in breadth and balance in the use of ICT across the curriculum. The school demonstrated a strong culture of self-evaluation and continuous improvement. A wide range of strategies had been put in place to evaluate the work of the school. Members of the management team regularly evaluated aspects of learning and teaching and provided staff with valuable feedback. They regularly sampled pupils' work to ensure continuity and progression. A well established system was in place to track pupils' progress in English language and mathematics. Staff had made effective use of quality indicators developed nationally to review the school's work. As a result, the school had a clear understanding of its strengths and areas for development. It had put in place a succinct and appropriate improvement plan.

#### **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:

- further improve pupils' attainment in English language;
- make more effective use of ICT across the curriculum; and
- build on recent improvements and existing good practice in learning and teaching to ensure consistently high quality learning experiences for pupils at all stages of the school.



### **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.

Jacqueline Horsburgh  
HM Inspector

13 June 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	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
Effectiveness and deployment of staff with additional responsibilities	Good
Self-evaluation	Very 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.

<b>What parents thought the school did well</b>	<b>What parents think the school could do better</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Children enjoyed being at school and teachers set high standards for pupils' attainment.</li><li>• There was mutual respect between teachers and pupils and children were treated fairly in the school.</li><li>• The school had a good reputation in the community.</li><li>• Staff made parents feel welcome in the school.</li><li>• Staff showed concern for the care and welfare of pupils.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Improve the maintenance of the school buildings.</li></ul>
<b>What pupils thought the school did well</b>	<b>What pupils think the school could do better</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• They felt safe in school and were helped to keep safe and healthy.</li><li>• Teachers expected them to work hard, praised them when they did well and helped them when they had difficulties.</li><li>• Teachers checked their homework.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A few did not feel that some pupils behaved well or that staff dealt effectively with bullying.</li><li>• They did not consider that they always received an appropriate amount of homework.</li></ul>
<b>What staff thought the school did well</b>	<b>What staff think the school could do better</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Staff were pleased with almost all aspects of the work of the school.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Support staff considered that communication and aspects of team work could be improved.</li></ul>



## **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 Education and Cultural 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, Unit 7, Ground Floor Suite, 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](http://www.hmie.gov.uk).

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### **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](http://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](mailto:enquiries@scottishombudsman.org.uk). More information about the Ombudsman's office can be obtained from the website: [www.scottishombudsman.org.uk](http://www.scottishombudsman.org.uk).

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