



**Whitecrook Primary School
Clydebank
West Dunbartonshire
Council
15 June 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

Whitecrook Primary School is a non-denominational school. It serves the Whitecrook area of Clydebank. The roll was 146 when the inspection was carried out in April 2010. Children's attendance was in line with the national average in 2008/2009.

2. Particular strengths of the school

- Highly motivated children who are well behaved and enjoy their learning.
- Staff relationships and their care for the welfare of all children, in particular the promotion of children's health and wellbeing.
- Partnerships with parents and the community to support children's needs.
- Staff who strive to meet the needs of all learners.
- The quality of leadership across the school and the approaches to improving the school.

3. How well do children learn and achieve?

Learning and achievement

Across the school, children are very well motivated and engaged in their learning. They feel safe and happy, and are proud of their achievements. Children are gaining very good citizenship and enterprise skills through their involvement in initiatives such as buddying younger pupils and achieving success in local competitions. They are developing a very good range of healthy living, creative and physical skills by taking part in lunchtime and after-school clubs. These include netball, football and arts and crafts. In most lessons children are engaged in active, purposeful learning. They are beginning to set targets to improve their learning. They display confidence and enthusiasm and work together very well, for example, to discuss ideas, solve problems, and create displays in their collaborative learning groups. This needs to become more consistent

across the school. Children's knowledge and understanding of healthy eating and healthy lifestyles is very strong which has resulted in the school achieving a health promoting school award.

Across the school, children are making very good progress in reading and mathematics and good progress in listening, talking and writing. Almost all children achieve appropriate national levels of attainment in reading and mathematics and most do so in writing. Attainment in writing has fluctuated recently and attainment in mathematics is predicted to decline slightly this year. Children listen attentively and talk confidently during class discussions. They are secure in discussing key features of books, including characters and the way authors use vocabulary to create effects. Children write very well for a variety of purposes and audiences. Standards of presentation are good. Children with additional support needs are making good progress in English language and maths. In mathematics, children are developing a sound understanding of written calculations involving number, money and measurement. They use their skills appropriately to interpret information from a range of graphs, including bar graphs and pie charts. Children are not always secure when describing how they solved problems.

Curriculum and meeting learning needs

Across the school, staff provide children with an appropriately broad curriculum. The school provides all children with two hours of high-quality physical education each week. Staff are beginning to improve the curriculum by taking account of *Curriculum for Excellence*, particularly in relation to cross-curricular topic work. They have made a positive start to planning for literacy and numeracy across the curriculum. Recent improvements to the writing programme are ensuring children are more motivated to write and are building on previous learning. Across the school, children take part in well-planned learning experiences in enterprise education and healthy living. Children use information and communications technology (ICT) to research and support topic work.

There is now a need to review the school timetable to ensure all time is being used effectively to develop learning. Staff know children very well and set tasks and activities at the right level of difficulty for most children. Staff use an extensive range of assessments to identify effectively children who need additional support. Teachers take very good steps to ensure that all children are included appropriately and achieving as well as they can. The depute headteacher coordinates support for pupils very effectively and provides valuable guidance and support for staff. She deploys effectively pupil support assistants, the support for learning teacher and early intervention teacher to provide very good support for individuals and groups of children. Small focus groups on social skills development and movement skills are working well to help develop children's confidence. Children with additional support needs are making good progress towards achieving their own learning targets. Most teachers share the purpose of lessons with children and use questioning well to encourage them to think and to contribute their ideas and opinions. Children are involved in reviewing learning at the end of lessons. Teachers provide regular homework but it does not always have sufficient variety.

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

Staff work very well with a range of partners such as the occupational therapist who supports the development of the daily movement programme. Social work and psychological services work well with the school to help meet children's emotional and social needs. The school has developed a positive partnership with the health promotion department to help develop children's awareness of the dangers of smoking and drug and alcohol abuse. The school has good arrangements to support children as they transfer from nursery into primary school and from P7 to secondary school. Staff take great care to ensure that children are well supported as they progress through the school. The school keeps parents well informed through letters and information leaflets, parents' evening and helpful reports on their children's progress. The school has an active and supportive Parent

Council and fund raising committee. Parents feel that they are consulted regularly and effectively. They are confident that concerns are taken seriously and addressed. Staff have developed effective partnerships with local employers and organisations, such as the local bank to enhance children's learning. The school is good at sorting out complaints from parents, children and other members of the community.

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

Children have an active voice in the school. They take on responsibilities enthusiastically and are developing their leadership roles well. They are involved regularly in decision making through a variety of committees. These include the school council, eco committee and the health committee. Staff seek their views regularly on a range of aspects of the work of the school. Teachers are currently developing approaches to involving children more actively in discussions about improving learning. The school council has taken forward a number of developments which have led to improvements. These include contributing to the house system and organising playground games. All staff are highly committed to the school. Teachers and support staff take on additional responsibilities. They participate in working groups and many provide after-school activities for children. Staff have identified accurately strengths and areas for development of the school. They make effective use of the information that they gather from a range of sources to help them improve the school.

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

Staff create a warm, caring and supportive ethos across the school. Children are friendly, open and considerate to others. Staff have high expectations of attainment in English language and mathematics. The school regularly shares children's achievements through assemblies

and high-quality displays around the school. All staff know what to do to keep children safe and well. They understand their role in child protection. The depute headteacher coordinates the school's approaches to protecting children exceptionally well. Staff treat children fairly and equally. They encourage children to respect other religions and cultures. They work well with the local Tulloch Trust to promote anti-sectarianism in the community. There are appropriate arrangements in place for religious observance.

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

The headteacher and depute headteacher demonstrate effective teamwork. The headteacher has developed a positive attitude among staff regarding continuous improvement. Staff contribute willingly to improving the school. The depute headteacher (DHT) supports the headteacher well and provides an outstanding contribution to the leadership and management of the school. The management team should now take steps to distribute aspects of the heavy remit of the DHT across the school. This will further strengthen the school's capacity to continue to improve.

8. What happens next?

The inspection team was able to rely on the school's robust self-evaluation. As a result, it was able to change its focus during the inspection to support further improvements within the school.

The school provides a very good quality of education. Therefore, we will make no further visits in connection with this inspection. The education authority will inform parents about the school's progress as part of the authority's arrangements for reporting to parents on the quality of its school.

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

- Develop further the curriculum, taking account of the principles of *Curriculum for Excellence*, ensuring progression and continuity in learning.
- Continue to develop children as independent learners.

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 Whitecrook Primary School.

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

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

The curriculum	good
Improvement through self-evaluation	very good

HM Inspector: Sadie Cushley
15 June 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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