



**Netherton Primary School
North Lanarkshire Council
8 March 2011**

HM Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) inspects schools in order to let parents¹, children and the local community know whether their school 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.

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1. The school

Netherton Primary School is a non-denominational school. It serves the Netherton area of Wishaw. The roll was 158 when the inspection was carried out in January 2011. Children's attendance was in line with the national average in 2009/2010.

2. Particular strengths of the school

- Children's positive behaviour, attitudes and enthusiasm.
- Children's ability to evaluate and discuss their learning.
- The use of assessment strategies and self-evaluation to build on and improve children's experiences of learning.
- The quality of relationships between staff and children.
- The role all staff play in making decisions and improving experiences for children.
- The impact of effective teamwork, including the leadership of the headteacher, in improving learning and teaching.

3. How well do children learn and achieve?

Learning and achievement

Children achieve very well across the school. They are highly successful and confident in their learning. They are enthusiastic and fully engaged in their learning experiences both in and out-of-school. Consistent high-quality feedback is given to all children about their learning. Cooperative approaches to learning are used in each class and children are enthused and challenged as a result. Younger children are unusually skilled in taking responsibility for their learning. They are highly motivated in their purposeful play sessions. They speak confidently with understanding about what they are learning and ask well-thought out questions to find out what others have learned. By the senior stages, children are frequently making decisions about what they learn. Through the highly successful 'Feedback Finders'

initiative, children are nominated to give feedback to their teacher on a particular lesson. They are able to explain what is successful and make suggestions to improve the lesson. These discussions are mature and thoughtful and as a result staff have adapted lessons. Children are able to deepen their learning and are highly-reflective learners. Information and communications technology (ICT) is used consistently well throughout the school and children regularly use the national school intranet (Glow) to link with other schools on topic work.

The extensive range of learning experiences offered to children out-of-class enhances children's overall achievement. The school choir has been consistently successful in local and regional competitions. Children are making a difference to their community by working with local business partners and members of the immediate community to create their attractive eco-garden. Children and staff have achieved their Gold Health Promoting Schools award. Older children with a group of staff have successfully completed the challenging 'Heart start' initiative. Children are highly aware of the need to stay fit and healthy and can confidently discuss aspects of their health and wellbeing. Children's awareness of global issues is impressive through their support and fundraising for a children's charity in Peru.

Standards of progress and attainment in English language and mathematics have increased over the last three years. Almost all children are making very good progress from prior levels of attainment. There is still scope for attainment to be improved further for groups of learners at the upper stages. Children's listening skills are very good and they are confident and skilled in talking in groups. Staff have promoted the enjoyment of reading successfully and children read with fluency, expression and an understanding of different texts. Children are enthusiastic about writing. They enjoy writing stories and poetry and are regularly producing high-quality pieces of work. In mathematics, attainment is consistently high. Children are confident in number, money and measurement. They have made particular progress in using ICT in mathematics, for example, when handling information to create and present data in complex charts and graphs.

Curriculum and meeting learning needs

The school's outstanding approach to self-evaluation is consistently improving children's learning experiences across the curriculum. Staff are very familiar with and plan using the experiences and outcomes in *Curriculum for Excellence*. Children now make effective links across different curricular areas to reinforce their knowledge and skills. This is a key strength in their learning across the school. Literacy and numeracy programmes are well established. Children often learn skills in these areas through health and wellbeing and, for younger children, purposeful play sessions. The school provides a range of good-quality physical education each week but does not yet give two hours to each class. Visiting specialists enhance children's skills and experiences. Extra-curricular clubs and a variety of outings are arranged for children throughout the year, often related to topic work. Older children benefit from their annual residential experience at Kilbowie.

Children's needs are very well met. Learning is planned very well and children's skills are impressive when discussing their own learning targets and how to improve their work. At the request of parents, staff are developing a more flexible recording system, to involve parents and children. Teachers use exciting approaches and teaching is outstanding in some classes. Children with different needs are very well supported. Meaningful individual learning plans are created with them and their parents. Support staff work sensitively with children. As a result of these approaches children who need additional support are making good progress in their learning. Homework is interesting and adapted to suit each class.

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

Staff work very well with other professionals to help children learn. Parents are positive about almost all aspects of the work of the school. Communications with parents are good. The Parent Council is very supportive of the school and has helped improve, for example,

transport links to secondary school. It is developing a self-evaluation project for all parents. The parent-teacher association organises social events, and helps raise substantial funds for the school. The school has strong links with local businesses. Effective support is in place for children moving from P7 to Clyde Valley High School, but arrangements as children enter P1 need to be improved.

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

All staff appreciate and enjoy working in the school. Team work and morale are high. Staff are highly committed to self-evaluation and to monitoring the progress of developments. They involve children as equal partners in this process. Children are making sensible, reflective decisions about what makes learning meaningful. Their views are an important part of the culture of self-evaluation which permeates all aspects of school life. For example, children felt they did not have enough access to ICT in mathematics. Staff responded by making this a priority in the improvement plan and now children are better involved and learning more in their mathematic lessons. Staff reflect and evaluate their work each day and adapt learning as needed. This information is used to plan more effectively with children and results in better progress for children. Staff readily share good practice. All staff, including support staff, are consulted and take on leadership roles outwith the classroom to develop and improve for example, literacy, health and wellbeing and eco-schools work across the school. The school also surveys its 'user' groups within the local community to gather their views on how to improve aspects of school life.

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

Staff and children have very high expectations of behaviour and learning. Expectations and presentation of work are high and children readily respond to the challenges staff set them. Praise is used effectively to encourage and support children. Children are confident

that they know what to do if they are worried or upset. All staff are trained in the protection of children and know what to do to keep children safe and protected from harm. Staff have very good procedures in place to respond promptly if children are absent from school without reason. Children have a good understanding of fairness and equality. They are highly respectful about different faiths and cultures. Staff provide regular opportunities for religious observance.

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

The headteacher provides inspirational leadership. She is well respected by children, parents and staff. She shares her vision of the school successfully with children, parents and staff. She leads improvements effectively in the school, ably supported by the principal teacher. Her understanding of and commitment to self-evaluation is outstanding. She is aware of the skills and talents of all staff and encourages all to take a leadership role in improving the school. This approach is highly effective and staff and children feel empowered to take forward developments within the school. Through close staff teamwork and strong self-evaluation, the school is very well placed 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 schools.

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

- Continue to develop the curriculum taking account of *Curriculum for Excellence*.
- Develop further approaches to recording individual achievements with children and parents.

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 Netherton Primary School.

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

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

The curriculum	very good
Improvement through self-evaluation	excellent

HM Inspector: Elizabeth Paterson
8 March 2011

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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