



**Glengowan Primary School
and Nursery Class
Caldercruix
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 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

Glengowan Primary School is a non-denominational school with a nursery class. It serves the villages of Caldercruix and Longriggend and outlying areas. The roll was 193, including 63 in the nursery, when the inspection was carried out in January 2011. Children's attendance was in line with the national average in 2008/2009.

2. Particular strengths of the school

- The quality of children's learning and outdoor experiences in the nursery class.
- Well-behaved children who are keen to learn.
- Staff commitment to high-quality care and welfare and the provision of a broad range of out-of-school hours learning.
- Very effective use of self-evaluation to improve children's learning.
- Leadership of the headteacher.

3. How well do children learn and achieve?

Learning and achievement

Children in the nursery are happy and settled. They are confident, relaxed and enjoy their learning. They play very well together, cooperate with staff, and help each other in their play. Children are involved in planning and developing their ideas with staff. They are enthusiastic about learning and gain high levels of success. Across the school, children are motivated and keen to learn. The school has a calm, purposeful ethos which helps children in their learning. Children work well together in pairs and in groups. They are motivated and engaged by the active approaches to learning, particularly in literacy and mathematics. Children are given a number of opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning. Staff need to give children more of these opportunities to encourage more independent learning.

In the nursery class, children's achievements are widely celebrated. Children are proud of their nursery. They are keen to help tidy up and look after the garden and are becoming more independent, for example, in getting themselves ready for outdoor play. Across the school, children are given a wide range of opportunities to make valuable contributions to the school community. They take responsibility for several groups including the eco committee, pupil council, Fairtrade committee, health committee, as well as acting as 'Buddies' to P1 children. Children achieve success both within and beyond the classroom. They have achieved a gold level award within the education authority's health promotion scheme and are working towards their first green flag as an eco school. At all stages, children can take part in a wide range of out-of-school hours activities. They can confidently talk about what they need to do to stay healthy and have recently introduced a 'try a vegetable' for a month scheme. They also take part in well planned cookery activities.

In the nursery class, children are making very good progress in developing early language and mathematical skills. They listen well, enjoy songs and stories, and take part in discussions with friends and staff. Most children are beginning to explore early writing in their play, writing their names and learning about letters and sounds. Almost all children are developing good counting skills and starting to learn about numbers. Across the school, most children are attaining appropriate national levels in reading and writing. In mathematics, almost all children are attaining appropriate national levels. Most children listen well to each other and to the teacher. They are confident in talking about their work. Children read regularly both in and out of school. They can discuss a range of authors and their work. Children write for a variety of purposes and produce good quality pieces of writing for display across the school. Children would benefit from opportunities to discuss, debate and present issues more regularly. In mathematics children are making very good progress. Active approaches to learning in mathematics are leading to better engagement of children.

Most children are confident when carrying out written and mental calculations. Information and communications technology (ICT) is

used very well to support their mental mathematics activities. Across all stages, children are developing their problem solving skills well.

Curriculum and meeting learning needs

In the nursery class, staff are using *Curriculum for Excellence* to plan a broad range of enjoyable and stimulating learning experiences. Children are actively involved in planning their learning experiences using mind maps and big books. The attractive outdoor space is used very well to extend children's learning. Staff should build on the good start made and develop the curriculum further to ensure even more challenge, choice and flexibility for all children. Across the school, staff provide children with an appropriately broad curriculum. They have started to make use of some aspects of *Curriculum for Excellence* in planning children's learning, particularly in literacy and numeracy and within topics. Staff have worked together well to plan and deliver these topics. They now need to build on this work in other areas, for example, in health and wellbeing. Children at all stages benefit from the well-planned cooking programme. All children benefit from two hours of good-quality physical education each week. ICT is used well to support children's learning across the curriculum. As planned, staff should make greater use of the rich outdoor learning environment to enhance the curriculum.

Across the school and nursery class, staff meet the learning needs of all children very effectively. In the nursery class, activities are well matched to children's interests and learning needs. Staff know children very well and are sensitive to individual care needs. They interact with children in ways that help to build confidence and ensure that children feel valued and successful members of the nursery. Staff work with parents and with other professionals to provide well-planned and effective support for children who need extra help with their learning. Across the school, staff match learning activities to the needs of all learners very well. Most children are engaged well in their learning. In the most effective practice, staff provide children with well paced, challenging and stimulating activities. Children who need additional support have had their needs carefully identified and are

making very good progress. Classroom assistants and the Early Years Literacy worker are providing very effective and valuable support to children. Pastoral care is of a very high quality. All teachers share with children what they want them to learn. They explain the purpose of each lesson well and regularly review what has been learned. Children are given useful feedback on their writing but this needs to be further developed in other curricular areas. Regular homework is given and these activities are being developed to become more varied.

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

In the nursery class, staff have very good relationships with parents and regularly share information about children's progress. Staff keep parents well informed about the life and work of the nursery and involve them in children's learning. Across the school and the nursery class, staff work very well with a range of professionals to support children's learning and wellbeing. Parents are supportive of the school and assist staff within the classrooms and on outings. An active Parent Council is in place and parents have contributed to developing positive behaviour and home learning policies. Parents receive regular information through newsletters, curriculum workshops, parents' evenings and progress reports. The school has an appropriate complaints procedure and parents are consulted about health education. Effective arrangements are in place to support children when they move from nursery to P1 and from P7 to Caldervale High School.

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

Children take part with enthusiasm when given responsibility within the school. They take their different roles seriously and have pride in representing their school. Their views on a number of issues are

regularly sought and acted upon. Children are involved in improving both the school and local community environment. They work very well with a range of community partners to improve their area, for example, with the community garden project. Nursery children, the janitor and parents serve alongside children on the eco committee. Children also lead assemblies, perform in school concerts and contribute to church services. Staff work together well as a team and come together regularly on in-service days to reflect on the contribution of all staff to school improvement. They are committed to improving their own skills and knowledge and to contribute to continually improving the work of the school and nursery class. The headteacher has robust systems in place for monitoring the work of the school and tracking children's progress. Focused observations of learning take place with very detailed and effective feedback given to staff. Staff respond well to this advice and use it to improve learners' experiences further.

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

The school and nursery environment is very warm and welcoming. Staff have established very positive relationships amongst all. Children are responsive to the staff's positive approaches which helps them enjoy their learning. Staff have high expectations of children's attendance, behaviour, learning and achievement. Assemblies take place on a regular basis and children's achievements are recognised and celebrated. The school chaplains visit regularly and contribute to the religious and moral education programme. A very wide range of out-of-school hours activities is provided to ensure that all children can achieve success. The school has a joint football team with its shared campus denominational school which includes girls and boys. Each year the school takes part in a cluster development which promotes children's understanding of cultural diversity. Child protection procedures are understood and implemented by all staff.

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

The headteacher is very committed to the school and nursery class. She has a clear sense of direction and understands how they can be further improved. The headteacher is successful in sharing her vision with staff, children and parents. She encourages teamwork and enables others to lead improvements. Staff are given the necessary support and professional development to help them improve the work of the school and the nursery class. They work well together to further improve experiences for children. The principal teachers carry out their remits well. They provide support to teachers and lead aspects of development including GLOW. The school is well placed to continue to improve.

8. What happens next?

As a result of the very good quality of education provided by the school and nursery class, 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.

- Involve children more in planning their learning to identify targets and next steps in learning.
- Further improve the curriculum taking account of *Curriculum for Excellence*.

At the last Care Commission inspection of the nursery class there was one recommendation, which had been addressed.

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 Glengowan Primary School and Nursery Class.

Primary school

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

Nursery class

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

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

The curriculum	good
Improvement through self-evaluation	very good

HM Inspector: Isabel Robb
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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