

REPORT TO: SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 15th FEBRUARY 2012

**REPORT ON: EDUCATION SCOTLAND (HMle) INSPECTION OF
CRAIGIEBARNES PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY CLASS**

REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

REPORT NO: 55- 2012

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 The purpose of this paper is to report on the findings of Education Scotland (HMle) following an inspection at Craigiebarnes Primary School and Nursery Class.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 It is recommended that the Scrutiny Committee:

- i) notes the contents of this report; and
- ii) instructs the Director of Education to monitor progress towards meeting the areas for improvement contained in the report.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 None.

4.0 MAIN TEXT

4.1 Craigiebarnes Primary School and nursery class were inspected by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMle) in September 2011. They published a report on their findings on 29th November 2011. At the time of the inspection 310 children were on the primary department roll and 55 children aged between three and five years were attending the nursery class on a part-time basis.

4.2 HMle identified the following key strengths of the school:

- Happy and confident children who enjoy their learning.
- Teamwork of staff in creating a positive and caring ethos.
- Partnership with parents.
- Use of the nursery outdoor area to develop children's physical skills.
- Children's skills in using computers to enrich their learning.

4.3 The following areas for improvement were agreed with the school and education authority:

- Ensure tasks and activities meet the learning needs of all children through appropriate differentiation, pace and challenge.
- Take a more focused approach to self-evaluation to ensure consistency in children's learning experiences.
- Continue to develop Curriculum for Excellence

4.4 Quality Indicators

4.4.1 HMle reports using a six-point scale for reporting performance:

excellent	outstanding, sector leading
very good	major strengths
good	important strengths with some areas for improvement
adequate/satisfactory	strengths just outweigh weaknesses
weak	important weaknesses
unsatisfactory	major weaknesses

4.4.2 The following quality evaluations were given at this inspection:

Quality Indicator	Nursery Grade	Primary Grade
Improvements in performance	Good	Good
Children's/Learners' experiences	Good	Good
Meeting learning needs	Good	Good
The curriculum	Good	
Improvement through self-evaluation	Satisfactory	

4.4.3 The Craigiebarns Primary School Improvement Plan (2009-2012) will be reviewed in order to maintain a focus on the areas for improvement identified by Education Scotland (HMle). These areas for improvement will be carried forward into the next School Improvement Plan 2012 - 2015 and will be regularly reviewed, monitored and evaluated in line with both the school's and the authority's quality improvement calendars.

4.4.4 Education Scotland indicated that they are satisfied with the overall quality of educational provision at Craigiebarns Primary School and Nursery Class. Therefore they 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 the school.

5.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

5.1 This report has been screened for any implications in respect of Sustainability, Strategic Environment Assessment, Anti-Poverty and Equality Impact Assessment and Risk Management.

5.2 There are no major issues.

6.0 CONSULTATION

6.1 This report has been subject to consultation with the Chief Executive, Depute Chief Executive (Support Services), Director of Finance.

7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 The following Background Papers were relied upon in preparation of this Report:

- EDUCATION SCOTLAND (HMIe) INSPECTION REPORT FOR CRAIGIEBARNES PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY CLASS, DUNDEE

MICHAEL WOOD
Director of Education

DATE 24th January 2012

**Craigiebarns Primary School and Nursery Class
Dundee City Council**

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29 November 2011

Dear Parent/Carer

**Craigiebarns Primary School and Nursery Class
Dundee City Council**

Recently, as you may know, my colleagues and I visited and inspected your child's school. Throughout our visit we talked to parents and children and we worked closely with the headteacher and staff. We wanted to find out how well children were learning and achieving and how well the school supported children to do their best. The headteacher shared with us the school's successes and priorities for improvement. We looked at some particular aspects of the school's recent work including leadership at all levels, active learning and tracking children's progress. As a result, we were able to find out how good the school was at improving children's education. I would now like to tell you what we found.

How well do children learn and achieve?

Overall, we think your children are happy, confident and engage well in their learning. In the nursery, children are happy and comfortable in the playroom and are developing positive relationships with each other. They continue to develop skills at playing together, sharing toys and taking turns. They are aware of nursery routines and rules. Children in the Visually Impaired Unit feel safe and are well cared for. They are confident in interacting with adults in the Unit and well-known adults across the school. Children in the Unit are developing well their sense of physical and social wellbeing. Across the primary stages, almost all children are well behaved and attentive in class. In almost all lessons, children have opportunities to be active in their learning and work together. Staff use learning logs and learning walls successfully to involve children more with their learning. They realise that there is scope to extend this work further. Children talk enthusiastically about participating in their 'Through the Decades' concert to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the opening of the school. Children achieve well in the expressive arts. For example, those who

participated in the school's wind and string ensembles achieved a gold award at the Dundee Arts Festival.

We are confident that most children are developing their literacy and numeracy skills well. In the nursery, most children are developing their ability to listen to adults and other children. A few children use story books independently in the playroom. The majority of older children recognise their name in print and can identify their own name on snack cards, painting labels and class registers. Children experiment with mark-making when writing tickets during imaginary play at the 'train'. They enjoy using early numbers and most children are learning to count and recognise numbers to ten. In the Unit, almost all children are making suitable progress in relation to the targets within their additional support plans. Across the primary classes, almost all children are developing very good skills in reading. They enjoy reading and discuss their ideas confidently. They discuss their ideas confidently. Children write well in a range of styles including, for example, play scripts. However, children would benefit from more opportunities to write at length. Overall, spelling and punctuation could be improved. Children are motivated with their mathematics and numeracy work. They respond positively to recently-introduced active learning approaches. Children are developing their numeracy skills well across the curriculum. For example, children in P5/6 and P6 are using their skills in measurement to create models of planets. Across the school, children are making very good progress in developing their health and wellbeing. They have a real understanding of what they need to do to have a healthy lifestyle. They can readily identify ways to stay safe. They are confident in discussing the need for a balanced diet. Children achieve well in a broad range of physical activities such as football, basketball, swimming and gymnastics. Across the school, children are developing effective skills in art and design. At several stages, they are able to reflect on the work of famous artists as a stimulus for their own work.

How well does the school support children to develop and learn?

Staff in the school and nursery support your children to develop and learn well. They provide children with a broad and balanced curriculum which develops children's skills in key curricular areas. Staff are becoming more confident in using the experiences and outcomes of Curriculum for Excellence when planning children's learning. The school makes effective use of visits to enhance the curriculum. For example, children in P4/5 visited Sensation as part of a topic on dinosaurs. Children in the nursery recently went on a farm visit. In the nursery, staff use the well-developed outdoor grounds effectively to support children in developing their physical skills. Children have good opportunities to use computers and, as a result, they are skilled in using them across the curriculum. Staff interact effectively with children. However, staff do not always share the purpose of activities with children. In most lessons, tasks and activities are set at an appropriate level of difficulty for most children. However, this is not consistent in all lessons. At times, the pace of lessons and use of teaching time could be sharper to create more challenge for all children. Across the school and nursery, staff should continue to work with children to help them identify their next steps in learning and to know themselves as learners. Support for learning staff work effectively with children who need additional help with their learning. The learning needs of these children are identified early and met well. Children in the Unit are well supported both in their own base and in the primary classes. Staff work hard to provide an appropriate range of activities to

encourage mobility and social independence. Throughout the school, staff work effectively with other services to support children both in school and with out-of-school activities. We think that the Craigiebarns Parent Partnership and you as parents support the school well.

How well does the school improve the quality of its work?

The headteacher and recently appointed depute headteacher are committed to the work of the school. Together with staff, they are now in a good position to develop a clearer sense of direction for the future development of the school. A range of approaches to monitor the work of the school are in place and lead to improvement. These now require a sharper focus to ensure a consistency in learning experiences across the school. Staff should seek the views of parents and children more in evaluating and developing the work of the school. Staff are reflective and are keen to continue to develop the experiences for your child. For example, the school's literacy group has raised successfully the profile of literacy in the school. We believe that, with the continued support of the local authority, Craigiebarns Primary School is in a sound position to improve further and provide even more positive learning experiences for your child.

This inspection of your school and nursery class found the following key strengths.

- Happy and confident children who enjoy their learning.
- Teamwork of staff in creating a positive and caring ethos.
- Partnerships with parents.
- Use of the nursery outdoor area to develop children's physical skills.
- Children's skills in using computers to enrich their learning.

We discussed with staff and the education authority how they might continue to improve the school and nursery class. This is what we agreed with them.

- Ensure tasks and activities meet the learning needs of all children through appropriate differentiation, pace and challenge.
- Take a more focused approach to self-evaluation to ensure consistency in children's learning experiences.
- Continue to develop Curriculum for Excellence.

What happens at the end of the inspection?

We are satisfied with the overall quality of provision. We are confident that the school's self-evaluation processes are leading to improvements. As a result, we will make no further visits in connection with this inspection. The local authority will inform parents about the school's progress as part of the authority's arrangements for reporting to parents on the quality of the school.

Alan Urquhart
HM Inspector

Additional inspection evidence, such as details of the quality indicator evaluations, for your school can be found on the Education Scotland website at <http://www.hmie.gov.uk/ViewEstablishment.aspx?id=8386&type=2>.

Please contact us if you want to know how to get the report in a different format, for example, in a translation. You can contact us at enquiries@educationscotland.gsi.gov.uk or write to us at BMCT, Education Scotland, Denholm House, Almondvale Business Park, Almondvale Way, Livingston EH54 6GA.

If you want to give us feedback or make a complaint about our work, please contact 01506 600200, or write to us at the above address or e-mail: feedback@educationscotland.gsi.gov.uk.

Footnote

1. This is a service for deaf users. Please do not use this number for voice calls as this will not connect.