



**Hayshead Primary School  
and Nursery Class  
Arbroath  
Angus Council  
9 June 2009**

This report tells you about the quality of education at the school<sup>1</sup>. We describe how children benefit from learning there. We explain how well they are doing and how good the school is at helping them to learn. Then we look at the ways in which the school does this. We describe how well the school works with other groups in the community, including parents<sup>2</sup> and services which support children. We also comment on how well staff and children work together and how they go about improving the school.

Our report describes the ‘ethos’ of the school. By ‘ethos’ we mean the relationships in the school, how well children are cared for and treated and how much is expected of them in all aspects of school life. Finally, we comment on the school’s aims. In particular, we focus on how well the aims help staff to deliver high quality learning, and the impact of leadership on the school’s success in achieving these aims.

If you would like to learn more about our inspection of the school, please visit [www.hmie.gov.uk](http://www.hmie.gov.uk). Here you can find analyses of questionnaire returns. Where applicable, you will also be able to find descriptions of good practice in the school.

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<sup>1</sup> The term ‘school’ is used to include the work of the nursery class, where relevant.

<sup>2</sup> 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**

Hayshead Primary School is a non-denominational school with a nursery class. It serves the Cliffburn and Hayshead areas of Arbroath. The roll was 454, including 72 children in the nursery when the inspection was carried out in March 2009. Pupils' attendance was in line with the national average in 2007/2008.

## **2. Particular strengths of the school**

- Polite and well-behaved children who are proud of their school and its achievements.
- The headteacher's outstanding contribution to the school community.
- Staff who work effectively as a team in delivering high quality learning experiences for children.
- The school's success in meeting children's learning needs.
- Children's high quality learning experiences within the support base.
- The well-planned, progressive curriculum.

## **3. Examples of good practice**

- The school's partnerships with other agencies and the community.
- The school's arrangements for meeting the needs of vulnerable children.

## **4. How well do children learn and achieve?**

### **Learning and achievement**

Children in the nursery are making very good progress in all aspects of their learning and development. Children are developing very good skills in exploring the natural world, creativity and energetic play through learning outdoors. They are very good at turn-taking and sharing. In literacy, they are very confident in exploring early reading and writing. They enjoy identifying simple words and sounds and also attempting to write them. They listen to and follow simple instructions well. Children's skills in talking are very good. They enjoy talking with each other about their chosen activities and interact confidently with adults. Most children are making very good progress with early mathematics. Most can count to ten and are confident in playing number games. Across the primary stages, children are motivated, enthusiastic and keen to learn. They have good opportunities to work collaboratively. In classes, children contribute confidently to discussions and work very well with each other during group tasks. They are actively involved in their learning and are beginning to be involved in planning learning. They engage in ongoing discussions about their work and receive helpful feedback about their progress. Children are developing confidence through a very broad range of experiences to achieve widely, including out-of-school activities, sports clubs and community groups. Visiting specialists and visitors help children develop very good skills in physical education. Children make very good use of their information and communications technology (ICT) skills to help them learn. They enjoy working together on a range of challenges during weekly activity time. For example, those at P4-P7 developed skills in planning and design when developing a new community play park. Children's personal, social and citizenship skills are developing very well. At P7, children develop these skills further through a residential experience. P6 and P7 children develop leadership skills through a range of responsibilities, for example, by acting as buddies for younger children. Over the last few years, the school has steadily improved children's attainment in reading, writing and mathematics. Most children are making good progress in

listening, talking and mathematics. The majority are doing so in reading and writing. At a few stages in the school, a significant number of children achieve national attainment levels earlier than might normally be expected. These gains are not always maintained as children progress through the school. At P7, children read with enthusiasm. They can describe favourite authors and have a good knowledge of Scots' language and different types of text. Most children present their written work well. They need more frequent opportunities to write at length to keep improving their skills. In mathematics, children at the early stages are developing a good understanding of early number work. Across the school, children successfully collect and organise evidence. They understand shape well and are confident in written number work. In a few classes, children's skills in mental calculation and problem solving are not well developed. Children with additional support needs are making very good progress towards achieving their own targets.

## **Curriculum and meeting learning needs**

In the nursery class, staff plan activities which help children make progress and are firmly based on play and enjoyment. They ensure that children have good opportunities to develop their social skills through play and in interacting with each other. Children are offered very good opportunities to develop their creativity through a variety of art and design activities and to follow their interests. They are developing their skills in ICT skills through using a range of equipment including computers, cameras and programmable toys. Across the primary classes, staff are improving the curriculum in line with the national initiative, *Curriculum for Excellence*. They have made very good progress in taking forward developments in social subjects and science. Staff have developed well-planned, progressive programmes in different curricular areas to provide children with a range of learning experiences. Children make good use of their literacy and numeracy skills across different areas of their learning. The school is making good progress towards providing two hours of physical education each

week for children. Staff work successfully with community partners to increase opportunities for children to take part in a range of sporting and cultural activities.

In the nursery and primary classes, children's learning needs are very well met. In the nursery, staff know children well and are very sensitive to their individual needs. They focus on helping children to be confident and successful in their learning. Children's needs are very clearly identified at an early stage, often prior to starting the nursery, through review meetings and home visits. At the primary stages, staff ensure tasks and activities are interesting and challenging and are well matched to children's needs. Class teachers use a wide range of approaches to capture children's interests. A few higher achieving children need to be given more challenging tasks and activities. Staff use assessment information well to identify children's next steps in learning. They give clear explanations and share the purposes of lessons with children. Almost all are skilled at questioning and sum up what has been learned at the end of lessons. They know children very well and work effectively as a team to ensure a supportive and caring environment for learning. Across the school, staff set regular and varied homework tasks to reinforce learning. Classroom assistants provide a very good level of support to help children make progress. Staff from the support base work closely with class teachers and are skilled in identifying and assessing what help is needed for children with additional support needs. They work closely with partner agencies to develop individual programmes for these children and set targets to help them to improve. Overall, staff from the support base provide a very high level of support for children who need extra help with their learning.

## **5. How well do staff work with others to support children's learning?**

The school works very well with parents and the local community. Staff know children and families very well and have built some very effective links within the local community. They have worked closely

with the ranger service to plan a wide range of activities during 'Eco Week', including building an outdoor classroom. The school has also developed links with several local businesses to enhance children's enterprise skills. The Parent Council works very closely with the school and organises social events for families. Staff continually encourage parents to contribute to children's learning. They communicate very effectively with parents through newsletters, reports and by sharing teachers' forward plans. The school provides helpful summaries of key documents, such as the school improvement plan, for parents and the community. It recognises the need to ask parents for their views on improving the school more regularly. Children are well supported as they move from nursery to P1 and from P7 to S1 at Arbroath Academy. The school has developed very effective partnerships with a range of agencies, for example, speech and language therapists, to support children's learning. Parents of children requiring additional support for learning are involved in reviewing children's targets. This should now be done on a more regular basis. The school is good at sorting out complaints from parents, children and other members of the community.

## **6. Are staff and children actively involved in improving their school community?**

Children feel that they have a say in making the school better. They are given the opportunity to be involved in decision making through the pupil council. A range of issues are discussed including aspects of the curriculum. This session they have learned to use their budget well to improve playground games. Children take on other important leadership roles, such as Junior Road Safety Officers, who provide helpful advice on personal safety. Children use the 'open door' policy of senior managers very well to regularly discuss ideas and make suggestions for improving school practice. Staff make very good use of golden time to promote positive behaviour amongst children. All staff are highly committed to improving the work of the school. They are focused on improving children's experiences and undertake a wide range of professional development activities. These include training in

cooperative group work and active learning. Senior managers create very good team working practices amongst all staff. They now plan to create smaller teams of staff to take forward school improvement projects. The head teacher has made an outstanding contribution to the school community. He has established a wide range of out-of-school clubs and weekend activities. His work with partners has led to a wide range of improvements for the community, including a new play park and community wing within the school. He is very highly respected by the whole school community. Teachers have useful discussions with senior staff about ways to improve their work. Senior staff visit classrooms regularly to evaluate learning. They need to use a wider range of self-evaluation activities to improve different aspects of the school. Staff need to continue to track children's progress in English language and mathematics rigorously to raise attainment further.

## **7. Does the school have high expectations of all children?**

The school is very welcoming and the children feel safe and happy. Staff provide a very high level of care and support. Children are polite, well behaved and proud of their school. They are treated with respect. Every child has opportunities for wider achievements and experiences that enhance their learning. All staff are aware of the school's child protection policy. Relationships between staff and children are very positive. Teachers set high standards for children's behaviour and achievements. Equality and cultural diversity are promoted well throughout the school. The customs and traditions of children who join the school from other countries are shared and celebrated. There is scope to further promote healthy eating. There are regular opportunities for religious observance in school through the programme of assemblies.

## **8. Does the school have a clear sense of direction?**

The headteacher and two depute head teachers provide high quality leadership for learning. They manage change skilfully and provide clear direction to staff to help improve the curriculum. Together, they have developed a very good range of strategies to help children overcome barriers to learning. The principal teachers model effective teaching and learning and lead a range of school improvement projects. Plans are in place for other staff to take on leadership roles to further improve the school. As a result of strong and effective leadership, and the high level of commitment of all staff, the school is well placed to improve further.

## **9. What happens next?**

As a result of the very good quality of education provided by the school, we will make no further visits following 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 raise attainment in reading, writing and mathematics.
- With staff, develop and implement a wider range of self-evaluation approaches to improve further school practice.

At the last Care Commission inspection of the nursery class there was one requirement, 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 Hayshead Primary School and Nursery Class.

Primary school

<b>Improvements in performance</b>	<b>good</b>
<b>Learners' experiences</b>	<b>very good</b>
<b>Meeting learning needs</b>	<b>very good</b>

Nursery class

<b>Improvements in performance</b>	<b>very good</b>
<b>Children's experiences</b>	<b>very good</b>
<b>Meeting learning needs</b>	<b>very good</b>

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

<b>The curriculum</b>	<b>very good</b>
<b>Improvement through self-evaluation</b>	<b>good</b>

**HM Inspector:** Graeme Logan  
9 June 2009

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This report uses the following word scale to make clear judgements made by inspectors.

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