

**REPORT TO:** SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 20 APRIL 2011

**REPORT ON:** HMIE INSPECTION OF SS PETER AND PAUL RC PRIMARY SCHOOL

**REPORT BY:** DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

**REPORT NO:** 211-2011

## **1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

**1.1** The purpose of this report is to report on the findings of the HMIE Inspection of SS Peter and Paul RC Primary School.

## **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** SS Peter and Paul RC Primary School was inspected by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) in November 2010. They published a report on their findings on 21 December 2010. At the time of the inspection the roll was 308.

**4.2** HMIE identified the following key strengths of the school:

- Confident, friendly children who respect and care for each other
- Staff teamwork and their commitment to the care and well-being of all children
- Positive links with the local community to enhance children's citizenship skills.

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

- Improve the curriculum by using *Curriculum for Excellence*
- Improve learning by increasing challenge and giving children better opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning
- Improve self-evaluation so that it has a more effective impact on children's learning and achievement
- Review the remits of the senior management team to focus directly on improving learning and achievement.

#### 4.4 Quality Indicators

4.4.1 HMIE reports use a six-point scale for reporting performance:

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

4.4.2 The following quality indicators from *"How Good Is Our School 3"* (HGIOS 3) were evaluated:

Quality Indicator	
Improvements in performance	Satisfactory
Learners' experiences	Satisfactory
Meeting learning needs	Satisfactory
The curriculum	Weak
Improvement through self-evaluation	Weak

4.5 The SS Peter and Paul's RC Primary School Improvement Plan (2009-2012) has been reviewed in order to maintain a focus on the areas for improvement identified by HMIE. These will be regularly monitored and evaluated in line with both the school and authority quality improvement calendar.

4.6 HMIE have indicated that they will make a return visit to SS Peter and Paul's RC Primary School within a year of the initial inspection and provide a report on progress towards the areas for improvement to parents/carers.

#### 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) and the Director of Finance.

#### 7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 None.

JIM COLLINS  
 Director of Education  
 4 April 2011

## ***SS Peter and Paul RC Primary School Dundee City Council***

**21 December 2010**

HM Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) inspects schools in order to let parents<sup>1</sup>, children and the local community know whether their school<sup>2</sup> 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](http://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.

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#### **1. The school**

Saints Peter and Paul RC Primary School is a denominational school. It serves the area north-west of the centre of Dundee. The roll was 308 when the inspection was carried out in November 2010. Children's attendance was below the national average in 2008/2009.

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

- Confident, friendly children who respect and care for each other.
- Staff teamwork and their commitment to the care and well-being of all children.
- Positive links with the local community to enhance children's citizenship skills.

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

### **Learning and achievement**

The quality of children's learning experiences is variable. In most classes, children work well together and are keen to learn. They discuss what they know about specific topics. Most contribute to the planning of work by identifying what they would like to learn more about. Children are becoming increasingly active in their learning. In most classes, children use core targets and success criteria to help them improve. Whilst these approaches are well embedded in some classes, they are not yet applied consistently across all.

Across the school, most children are achieving well by participating actively in whole-school events and a variety of out-of-school activities including clubs for sports and art. They are increasing their knowledge and understanding of caring for the environment through, for example, learning about recycling. The school has achieved an Eco-Schools Scotland bronze award. Most children are developing their citizenship skills. They achieve success in raising money for national and local charities such as Macmillan Cancer and Mary's Meals. At the upper stages, children are developing skills in enterprise. Children are making encouraging progress in their personal and social development. At P7, children act as buddies to younger children. Pupil council members represent the views of their class effectively. Children have participated successfully in the Dundee Science Festival. The school now needs to ensure all children participate fully in the life of the school and achieve well.

Most children are achieving appropriate national levels of attainment in listening, talking, reading, writing and mathematics. Many achieve these levels earlier than would normally be expected. Children have good skills in talking and listening and are confident in taking part in group discussions. Most children read well with expression and fluency. Children use their literacy skills productively in enterprise activities. Most children write well for a range of purposes and audiences. Children do not write often enough to ensure that their skills develop further. At all stages, children have a good understanding of mathematical shapes and are confident with calculations involving number, money and measurement. Their mental mathematics skills are improving. Children use mathematics successfully in a variety of contexts, for example at P7, in financial education. Most children at the upper stages can describe the strategies they use to solve mathematical problems. Children's understanding of information handling is not consistently well developed across the school.

### **Curriculum and meeting learning needs**

In the majority of classes, staff provide children with a broad curriculum. They use the local community well to enhance the curriculum. Visitors and visiting staff add value to children's learning experiences. Most staff have made a positive start to developing literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum. Most plan topics to link learning successfully. The

curriculum has important weaknesses, however. In the majority of classes, staff have not yet made effective use of *Curriculum for Excellence* to improve learning, including health and well-being as being the responsibility of all staff. Children do not yet take part in two hours of good-quality physical education each week. The headteacher should ensure that all children regularly experience all aspects of the curriculum. This should include a clear progression of skills in all curricular areas.

Across the school, tasks and activities meet the needs of most children. Teachers need to take greater account of children's prior learning and differing levels of ability when setting tasks and activities. Children need to be challenged further in their work and the pace of some lessons needs to be increased. Staff know children well and provide a high level of pastoral care. They have reviewed their approach to supporting children who require extra help with their learning and are now identifying their needs more effectively. Staff work well with other professionals to plan appropriate support. They review additional support plans on a regular basis, involving parents and children. Children benefit from regular homework activities which are appropriate most of the time.

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

The school works well with a supportive parent council. Parents help the school in various ways including fundraising. Pupil progress reports, newsletters and parents' evenings keep parents informed about their children's progress. The school deals with complaints well but the headteacher should now record complaints systematically. The school should ensure that all parents are consulted on health education. A significant minority of parents feel the school does not ask for their views on a regular basis. The school has very positive links with the local community including the Church. Children enjoy performing at local residential homes and at the Hilltown Festival. Appropriate transfer arrangements are in place when children move from nursery to P1 and from P7 to St John's RC High School.

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

Staff, children and parents have not been sufficiently involved in improving the work of the school. The school needs to gather and use their views more effectively to improve learning and achievement. The eco-committee has acquired considerable lottery funding to develop the playground. Staff work successfully in a range of working parties. The headteacher has recently put in place measures to monitor aspects of the work of the school. These have not yet been effective enough in improving children's learning experiences or the curriculum. Steps need to be taken to enable all staff to work together to learn from each other, for example in learning visits to each others' lessons. Senior staff need to evaluate the quality of learning across the school so that they can identify and share good practice to better effect.

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

Staff have positive relationships with children. The school provides a very welcoming ethos for children. Almost all children feel safe and cared for in school. They believe that they have adults they can speak to if they are worried. Staff are committed to the well-being and support of all children and have an appropriate awareness of child protection procedures. Children's wider achievements are celebrated well at assemblies and on displays around the school. Teachers and support staff praise children regularly and most have high expectations for children's behaviour. However, not all staff set high enough expectations for children's

learning. Equality and diversity are promoted through school assemblies and through religious and moral education. Children benefit from taking part in, and leading, regular worship.

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

The school does not presently have a clear enough sense of direction aimed at improving children's learning. It has strengths which include the very caring nature of its pastoral work within a community of faith. Children and staff practise the school's values in the daily life of the school. The headteacher is respected by staff, children and their parents. He now needs to work more closely with all staff, building on some promising initiatives developed recently by the deputy headteacher, to improve the quality of children's learning and achievement across the school. As part of this, the remits of senior staff need to be focused directly on improving learning, teaching and the curriculum. As yet, the school has not demonstrated the capacity to improve its work.

## 8. What happens next?

We will carry out a follow-through inspection visit within one year of publication of this report and will report to parents on the extent to which the school has improved. Following that visit, we may continue to check the improvements the school has made. We may also carry out a second follow-through inspection within two years of the original inspection report. If a second follow-through inspection visit is necessary then it will result in another report to parents on the extent of improvement that the school has made.

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

- Improve the curriculum by using *Curriculum for Excellence*.
- Improve learning by increasing challenge and by giving children better opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning.
- Improve self-evaluation so that it has a more effective impact on children's learning and achievement.
- Review the remits of the senior management team to focus directly on improving learning and achievement.

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 SS Peter and Paul RC Primary School.

<b>Improvements in performance</b>	<b>satisfactory</b>
<b>Learners' experiences</b>	<b>satisfactory</b>

<b>Meeting learning needs</b>	<b>satisfactory</b>
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We also evaluated the following aspects of the work of the school.

<b>The curriculum</b>	<b>weak</b>
<b>Improvement through self-evaluation</b>	<b>weak</b>

**HM Inspector:** Alan W Urquhart

21 December 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](http://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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## Footnotes

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.