

**Primary School Inspection**  
**A Report by HM Inspectorate of Education**  
**Our Lady of Lourdes Primary School**  
**East Kilbride**

**South Lanarkshire Council**  
**3 May 2005**

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## **1. Background**

Our Lady of Lourdes Primary School was inspected in January 2005 as part of a national sample of primary education. The inspection covered key aspects of the work of the school at all stages. It evaluated pupils' achievements, the effectiveness of the school, the environment for learning, the school's processes for self-evaluation and capacity for improvement. There was a particular focus on attainment in English language and mathematics.

HM Inspectors examined pupils' work and interviewed groups of pupils, including the pupil council, and staff. Members of the inspection team also met the chairperson of the School Board, representatives of the parent-teacher association (PTA), and a group of parents.

The inspection team also evaluated aspects of the school's progress in implementing national recommendations related to improving aspects of school meals provision.

Our Lady of Lourdes Primary School is a denominational school serving the areas of Westwood and Murray in East Kilbride. At the time of the inspection the roll was 413, including 50 in the nursery class. The proportion of pupils who were entitled to free school meals was below the national average. Pupils' attendance was above the national average.

The nursery class was inspected at the same time and is the subject of a separate report.

## **2. Key strengths**

HM Inspectors identified the following key strengths.

- The quality of pastoral care provided by caring and committed staff and the very good support for pupils who were having difficulties in their learning.
- Attainment in reading and mathematics, particularly at P1 to P3, and the positive impact on pupils of the use of play as a tool for learning.
- Pupils who were courteous, confident and very well behaved and their involvement in a wide range of extra-curricular activities.
- Partnerships with parents and the wider community.
- The leadership of the headteacher and depute headteachers in ensuring the continuous improvement of the school.

## **3. What are the views of parents and carers, pupils and staff?**

HM Inspectors analysed responses to questionnaires issued to a sample of parents, P4 to P7 pupils, and to all staff. Information about the responses to the questionnaires appears in [Appendix 2](#).

Parents and carers, pupils and staff were very positive about almost all aspects of the school. Parents and carers felt the school had a good reputation in the local community and that it was well led. All felt that their child enjoyed school. A few wanted more information on the school's priorities for improvement. Almost all pupils enjoyed school and felt that teachers knew them well and expected them to work hard. They were very proud of the new school building and believed that they had a say in deciding how to make the school better. A few felt that the behaviour of a small number of pupils could be better. All staff enjoyed working in the school. Almost all felt the school was well led. Staff highlighted the well-behaved, enthusiastic pupils and the very supportive parents as strengths of the school.

#### **4. How good are learning, teaching and achievement?**

##### **Pupils' learning experiences and achievements**

The school's curriculum provided pupils with a broad range of learning experiences. Teachers were developing the environmental studies programme, health education and personal and social development. Additional teaching time had been used effectively to raise attainment in English language and mathematics. Senior managers had begun to monitor the use of additional time with teachers. Staff made very effective use of play activities from P1 to P3. In particular, pupils were developing their problem solving skills at the 'maths challenge corner'. Teachers were developing their use of information and communications technology (ICT) to enhance learning and teaching. However, ICT did not yet fully support pupils' learning across the curriculum. The overall quality of teaching was good with some very effective examples of interactive teaching at P2, P3 and P7. Teachers were well organised, gave clear explanations and made good use of questions to develop children's understanding. Some teachers were very skilled at ensuring that pupils were able to recall and apply their learning effectively. Homework was well planned and set regularly. Teachers had warm and relaxed working relationships with pupils and used praise well to motivate them. Some teachers shared with pupils what they expected them to learn from lessons. However, teachers did not use this good practice consistently throughout the school. They used a range of effective teaching approaches with groups and individuals. They did not always ensure that the pace of learning and choice of activities provided a sufficient level of challenge for higher achieving pupils.

The quality of pupils' learning was good. Across the school, pupils were eager learners, confident and related well to one another. They were motivated, hard working and very well-behaved. Pupils at P6 and P7 were making good progress in listening and talking in French. At P6, pupils worked well together when creating a sound picture. Pupils in P5 were learning how to act out a situation to successfully solve a problem. Pupils throughout the school would benefit from more opportunities for working together, investigating and learning through practical activities.

Pupils had very good opportunities to contribute their views through the active pupil council. They had recently effectively reviewed the school policy on promoting racial equality. Pupils at P4 were responsible for planning and developing a wildlife garden in the playground. They approached the task with maturity and great enthusiasm. All pupils had a good understanding of health issues such as personal safety and the importance of a healthy lifestyle. The school was working towards recognition as a health promoting school. Pupils at P6 had participated in an enterprise activity where

they had organised the recording of a CD of the school choir. The whole-school community was active in fund-raising for charity. A notable number of pupils took part in a wide range of sporting and musical extra-curricular activities. Pupils had many opportunities to display their talents in music and drama performances, including Scots language recitations, for parents and the community. The school held regular assemblies to recognise pupils' achievements including improvements in academic work, effort and social skills

### **English language**

The quality of pupils' attainment in English language was good. Standards in reading and writing were improving steadily. Pupils' attainment in reading was very good. More than half of pupils at P2 were achieving national levels earlier than would normally be expected. P1 and P2 pupils, in particular, were making very good progress in literacy skills. From P3 to P7, most pupils were achieving appropriate national levels of attainment in reading and writing. Pupils were making good progress in classwork but some could achieve even better standards. Throughout the school, pupils listened attentively and responded well to teachers' instructions and explanations. However, there was no clear evidence of their attainment in listening and talking as it was not assessed systematically. Pupils in P7 spoke enthusiastically about books they had read and about their favourite authors. Pupils from P5 to P7 were skilled at reading for information and were able to discuss the writer's opinions and technique. Overall, in writing, most pupils were attaining appropriate levels. Pupils at P2 were making very good progress in writing instructions and reports. Pupils at all stages were able to write at an appropriate level for a variety of purposes and audiences. Higher attaining pupils were capable of tackling more challenging writing tasks.

### **Mathematics**

The overall quality of attainment in mathematics was very good. In recent years attainment in mathematics had improved. Almost all pupils were achieving appropriate national levels of attainment in key aspects of mathematics. Most pupils at P2 were achieving these levels early. Pupils performed very well in class and completed coursework with a high level of accuracy. Across the school most pupils were skilful in mental calculations. By P7, pupils had a good knowledge of angles and shapes and could interpret an appropriate range of graphs. Pupils had developed skills in a range of problem solving strategies and were learning how to apply them in real-life situations. Pupils used computers to support their learning in mathematics, especially in numeracy. They had regular opportunities to create databases and handle information.

## **5. How well are pupils supported?**

Teachers and support staff were caring and approachable. They were sensitive to pupils' needs and provided a high quality of pastoral care. Pupils felt safe in the school and were confident that staff would take appropriate action to support them if they had a problem. Health promoting activities included the daily provision of fresh fruit and water. Staff had organised a very successful health day in which pupils and parents were encouraged to take part in a range of health promoting activities. Staff made appropriate arrangements for the safe-keeping and administration of medicines.

The school had a well-developed approach to identifying and assisting pupils with additional support needs. Working closely with parents, teachers, agencies and specialist staff, the deputy headteacher effectively co-ordinated support for a range of pupils at different stages of the school. Pupils with additional support needs were very well supported. They were following clear targets set out in individualised educational programmes (IEPs). Staff, working in collaboration with the visiting teacher from the local authority Specialist Support Services, provided very good support for pupils in reading, writing and mathematics. Staff, in collaboration with the visiting support teacher, had introduced a very successful initiative to develop pupils' early writing skills at P2. Pupils who spoke English as an additional language (EAL) were making good progress in developing their language skills. They were well supported by the visiting teacher of EAL. Higher achieving pupils had appropriate profiles which recorded their strengths and areas for development. Despite this good practice, teachers did not always provide appropriately challenging activities to meet these needs.

## 6. How good is the environment for learning?

Aspect	Comment
Quality of accommodation and facilities	The new school building, opened in January 2004, provided very good accommodation and facilities. Classrooms were spacious, bright and well furnished. Staff had made very effective use of all available space. The quality of display was of a high standard and provided a stimulating and attractive environment in which pupils could learn. The school was very clean and well maintained. Access for disabled users was very good. Security arrangements were appropriate.
Climate and relationships, expectations and promoting achievement and equality	Staff, pupils and parents had a strong sense of identity and pride in their school. Staff had created a warm and welcoming environment for pupils, parents and visitors. Relationships between staff and pupils were very positive. Throughout the school, pupils were friendly, courteous and very well behaved. Pupils responded well to teachers' high expectations of their behaviour and achievements by working conscientiously and co-operatively. Pupils' achievements were recognised and promoted regularly in class and at school assemblies. The quality of teamwork and morale among the staff was very good. Staff were successfully developing a sense of equality and fairness through their programmes in religious and moral education. They were developing pupils' tolerance of diversity through regular assemblies and discussions with the pupil council. The school had very good links with the parish priest and local church. The school had organised very successful parenting classes which were very well supported by psychological services.
Partnership with parents and the community	The school's partnership with parents and the local community was very good. The headteacher and staff had very effectively managed the relocation to the new school building through

	<p>effective communication and very positive relationships. The School Board and PTA were very supportive. Parents had many opportunities to become involved in the life of the school. They had been consulted on a number of issues including programmes in health education. Parents of pupils in P1 had the opportunity to sample school meals. Staff arranged two formal meetings each year with parents to discuss their children's progress. They provided an interim and annual report. Pupils' involvement in school concerts and fund raising enhanced the school's reputation in the local community.</p>
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## 7. Improving the school

The school was very well placed to improve further. Attainment was very good in mathematics and improving in English language although there was scope to raise attainment further. The headteacher had successfully managed the relocation to the new school building and had inspired staff, pupils and parents to work together to further improve the school. Pupils were developing knowledge and skills across the curriculum and a range of positive skills and attitudes to learning.

The headteacher provided very good leadership. He was highly respected by pupils, staff, parents and the wider community. He had a clear vision for the school and delegated responsibilities to a range of staff to encourage their involvement in and ownership of school developments. He was very well supported by two deputy headteachers who carried out all of their responsibilities diligently and very effectively. The headteacher involved all staff fully in reviewing and evaluating the work of the school. Staff had regular opportunities to take part in working groups which had brought about improvement. Most recently, staff had been involved in developing approaches to environmental studies and learning through play. In recent years, the headteacher had effectively managed a number of key improvements in approaches to mental maths, thinking skills and reading. The school had well-developed approaches to improvement. The management team monitored and evaluated learning and teaching using a range of procedures. They provided feedback on teachers' plans, sampled pupils' work and made regular classroom visits. Both deputy headteachers regularly supported pupils in class. The headteacher had begun to track pupils' progress. However, working with staff, he needed to develop this further to raise the attainment of individual pupils.

### Main points for action

The school and education authority should continue to provide high quality and improving education. In doing so, they should take account of the need to:

- improve pupils' attainment in writing;
- develop more effective tracking of pupils' progress and attainment and ensure tasks are sufficiently challenging to meet the needs of all pupils; and
- develop the use of information and communications technology (ICT) in supporting pupils' learning across the curriculum.

## **What happens next?**

As a result of the high performance, the strong record of improvement and the very effective leadership of this school, HM Inspectors will make no further reports in connection with this inspection. The school and the education authority have been asked to prepare an action plan indicating how they will address the main findings of the report, and to share that plan with parents and carers. Within two years of the publication of this report the education authority, working with the school, will provide a progress report to parents and carers.

Lesley R. Brown  
HM Inspector

3 May 2005

## **Appendix 1 Indicators of quality**

### **We judged the following to be very good**

- Pupils' attainment in mathematics
- Pastoral care
- Accommodation and facilities
- Climate and relationships
- Expectations and promoting achievement
- Equality and fairness
- Partnership with parents, the School Board and the community
- Leadership

### **We judged the following to be good**

- Structure of the curriculum
- The teaching process
- Pupils' learning experiences
- Pupils' attainment in English language
- Meeting pupils' needs
- Self-evaluation

### **We judged the following to be fair**

- No aspects were found to be in this category

### **We judged the following to be unsatisfactory**

- No aspects were found to be in this category

## Appendix 2 Summary of questionnaire responses

Important features of responses from the various groups which received questionnaires are listed below.

<b>What pleased parents and carers most</b>	<b>What parents and carers would like to see improved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The school had a good reputation in the community.</li><li>• The school was well led.</li><li>• The high standards set by teachers and mutual respect between teachers and pupils.</li><li>• Children enjoyed being at school.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A few would like more information on the school's priorities for improvement.</li></ul>
<b>What pleased pupils most</b>	<b>What pupils would like to see improved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• They enjoyed being at school and felt safe and well looked after.</li><li>• Teachers listened to them and helped them in their learning.</li><li>• They had a say in making the school better.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The behaviour of a few pupils in school.</li></ul>
<b>What pleased staff most</b>	<b>What staff would like to see improved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• All staff enjoyed working in the school and were very happy with all aspects of school life.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Staff had no significant concerns they wished to see improved.</li></ul>



## **How can you contact us?**

### **If you would like an additional copy of this report**

Copies of this report have been sent to the headteacher and school staff, the Executive Director (Education Resources), local councillors and appropriate Members of the Scottish Parliament. Subject to availability, further copies may be obtained free of charge from HM Inspectorate of Education, 450 Argyle Street, Glasgow G2 8LG or by telephoning 0141 242 0100. Copies are also available on our website [www.hmie.gov.uk](http://www.hmie.gov.uk).

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If you are not satisfied with the action we have taken at the end of our complaints procedure, you can raise your complaint with the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman. The Scottish Public Services Ombudsman is fully independent and has powers to investigate complaints about Government departments and agencies. You should write to The Scottish Public Services Ombudsman, 4-6 Melville Street, Edinburgh EH3 7NS. You can also telephone 0870 011 5378 or e-mail [enquiries@scottishombudsman.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@scottishombudsman.org.uk). More information about the Ombudsman's office can be obtained from the website: [www.scottishombudsman.org.uk](http://www.scottishombudsman.org.uk)

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