

# West Coats Primary School

## Cambuslang

## South Lanarkshire Council

23 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 <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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### 1. The school

West Coats Primary School is a non-denominational school. It serves the town of Cambuslang. The roll was 469 when the inspection was carried out in April 2009. Children's attendance was in line with the national average in 2007/2008.

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

- Polite, helpful children who are eager to learn and to take responsibility.
- Well-planned opportunities for children to achieve widely.
- The commitment and success of staff in taking forward school improvements.
- The vision and leadership of the headteacher in supporting children and teachers to lead innovation and improve learning outcomes.

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

- Effective work in raising awareness of child exploitation online protection.
- Success of teachers in taking forward school improvements through the teachers' learning community group.
- Development of enterprising strategies through the use of class contact cover in art and design.

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

### **Learning and achievement**

Most children are enthusiastic and proud of their achievements. They are motivated and try to do their best. They work very well on activities without close supervision from an adult. Children have good opportunities to work collaboratively and support each other during group tasks. They understand the importance of being healthy and keeping themselves safe. Children have achieved success in a range of competitions. A group of older children were recently awarded second place in a Scottish Schools Cross Country event. A significant number of children are working together successfully to prepare for a musical performance of 'West Coats Musical.' Children, particularly from P4 to P7, benefit from many regular opportunities to achieve success, including a range of out-of-school activities. All children participate in an annual Christmas show and contribute to the summer and Christmas fairs. Children enjoy performing duties as helpers and serving on school committees such as the eco committee and the pupil council. At all stages children are developing very good skills in choosing and using a wide variety of materials in art lessons. Older children are developing their skills in using technology when producing presentations for new P1 children. Across the school, children are making very good progress in English language and mathematics. Over the last few years the school has steadily improved levels of attainment in reading and mathematics. Recent work on improving children's writing has been successful in raising attainment. In English language, children listen well and contribute confidently to discussions. They engage in discussion about their work and receive clear feedback on tasks. They read regularly for pleasure and are able to talk about their favourite authors. Children in P4 successfully

wrote letters to people in the community as part of their soccer sevens enterprise project. Most children are developing good skills in punctuation and present their work neatly. In mathematics, children are accurate in written number work and are developing a good understanding of measurement, shape and time in a variety of practical activities. Most children can explain with confidence how to make graphs and spreadsheets. At P7, children are able to use a range of strategies to solve problems. They use games consoles well to consolidate their learning in mathematics. This active form of learning has increased the motivation of many children.

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

Staff are improving the curriculum in line with the national initiative, *Curriculum for Excellence*. They provide children with a broad and balanced curriculum. Individual teachers have developed aspects of the curriculum across the school. This has worked particularly well in art and design where children develop a very good range of skills. Teachers plan learning experiences to ensure that children make very good use of their literacy and numeracy skills across other areas of learning. They provide good opportunities for children across all stages to develop their personal, social and citizenship skills. Staff encourage children to be enterprising through a range of initiatives and projects including a successful art exhibition in which every child exhibited work. The school is making good progress towards providing two hours of physical education each week for children. Staff should now take forward plans to revise aspects of the health education programme. The school's successful work with community partners has helped to increase opportunities for children to take part in a range of activities. Children's learning is enriched by a range of outings and visitors to the school. There are good opportunities for children to use their information and communications technology (ICT) skills across learning. Teachers give clear explanations and share the purposes of lessons with children. In most instances, they plan a range of stimulating activities which encourage children to be actively involved in their learning. Further steps should be taken to increase the pace and challenge of learning, particularly for higher achieving children. Children benefit from regular homework tasks which support aspects of their learning. At the upper stages, children are responding well to the use of GLOW technology to access and complete homework online.

Overall, children's learning needs are well met. Across lessons, teachers set tasks and activities at the right level of difficulty for most children. They give clear explanations and share the purpose of lessons with children. They provide clear feedback to help children understand what they need to do to improve their learning. In most lessons teachers use questioning effectively to challenge and extend children's learning. The school has well-developed and effective approaches for identifying those children with additional learning needs. The depute headteachers work very effectively with individuals and groups who require additional support in their learning. Staff make good use of well-planned individualised educational programmes (IEPs) to help children with additional support needs to achieve success and make progress in their

learning. The school should now involve children more in setting and reviewing learning targets.

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

Staff have formed helpful partnerships with a range of agencies and individuals outside the school to help children progress in their learning. Partners include the educational psychologist, school nurse and health and social work services. Staff from Glasgow Metropolitan College have worked very effectively with children to help them develop skills in art and design. The school communicates effectively with parents through newsletters, parents' evenings and an annual written progress report. There are appropriate procedures in place to sort out complaints from parents and children. The effective Parent Council provides good support for the school and is working to engage parents more fully in their children's learning. Members of the Parent Council have successfully worked with staff to design questionnaires to survey parents' views of the school. The school provides valuable workshops and meetings in response to parents' requests. Parents contribute very well to fundraising activities and help to support learning in classes and on school excursions. There are well-planned arrangements in place to support children moving from nurseries to primary 1 and from primary 7 to Cathkin High School.

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

Children enjoy taking responsibilities across the school. They take their duties seriously when helping in the dining room, presenting at assemblies and acting as playground buddies. The school has been awarded a Level 3 Healthy School Accreditation. Older children are increasing their active citizenship skills through, for example, running a successful Fair Trade tuck shop. Teachers discuss aspects of learning and teaching and share good practice in order to improve the school. They are fully involved in development groups to plan and take forward key priorities. They have successfully worked together to develop the use of ICT across the school. Senior staff should provide more opportunities for support staff to be involved in improving aspects of the work of the school. The school successfully raises money for and supports a range of charities and a school in Harare. The headteacher asks children and parents for their views on how to improve the school. This information is used very effectively to inform decision making about the school improvement plan. The priorities in the plan have improved key aspects of children's learning, such as writing. The headteacher, along with the deputy heads and principal teacher, leads staff in monitoring the work of the school. They visit classes and provide teachers with valuable feedback on aspects of learning and teaching. The school tracks children's progress effectively and this has had an impact on improving children's attainment.

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

Children are proud to attend West Coats Primary School and welcome visitors into their school. They help each other out in classes and in the playground. Children have very positive attitudes towards school and towards their own achievement. They feel they can share their concerns confidentially if they are worried or upset. They consider that they are treated fairly and equally and are clear about what they would do to challenge discrimination or prejudice. All staff have high expectations of children's effort and behaviour. Teachers use a variety of successful approaches to encourage children to work well. They do not yet have equally high expectations of what children can achieve in their learning. All staff are highly committed to the wellbeing and support of all children. They are knowledgeable about child protection procedures including internet safety. The school takes appropriate action if children are absent from school without explanation. Children's many achievements are recognised in high-quality wall displays and at assemblies. They have good opportunities to participate in religious observance through regular assemblies.

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

The headteacher and staff are highly committed to the school and the children. She provides strong and effective leadership in taking forward improvements in learning. Across the school, staff take opportunities to lead working groups and secure improvements. They are developing their leadership roles through taking responsibility for coordinating aspects of the work of the school. Teachers feel confident in trying out new ideas and practices in their classrooms. Staff are reflective about their practice and in discussion with others adapt and change their teaching to improve learning for children. The headteacher and senior leadership team are clear about areas of practice which the school needs to improve. Staff use the information they gather to improve the quality of learning experiences across the school and to maintain high levels of attainment. As a result of very effective self-evaluation, 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.

- Take further steps to make sure children are consistently challenged in their learning, particularly higher achieving children.
- Take forward plans to involve children more fully in setting targets within their individual educational programmes.

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 West Coats Primary School.

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

We also evaluated the following aspects of the work of the school.

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

**HM Inspector:** Jacqueline Horsburgh  
23 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

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## Footnotes

1. The term 'school' is used to include the work of the nursery class, where relevant.
  2. 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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