



**Falla Hill Primary School
and Nursery Class
Fauldhouse
West Lothian Council
21 September 2010**

We published a report on Falla Hill Primary School and Nursery Class in September 2008. That report set out key strengths of the school and main points for action.

This follow-through report is based on an inspection visit which was carried out in May 2010. It tells you about improvements since the original inspection in the quality of education which the school¹ provides. It also comments on how the school is getting on with the main points for action. First we focus on changes in the core work of the school. We explain how the school has got better at helping children to learn and benefit from being at the school. Next we look at the key processes which enable this to happen, including the involvement of parents². Our report also describes developments in the 'ethos' of the school, by which we mean how well children are cared for and how much is expected of them in all aspects of school life. Finally we comment on improvements in leadership to help the school achieve its aims.

A copy of this report has been placed on the HMIE website www.hmie.gov.uk. Where applicable, you will also find analyses of questionnaire returns.

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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1. The school

Falla Hill Primary School and Nursery Class serves an area of Fauldhouse. The headteacher took up post in August 2008.

2. Particular strengths of the school

- Leadership in improving children's learning.
- The positive ethos in the school which allows children to engage in effective learning.
- The commitment of staff, children and parents in working together to improve the school.

3. How well do children learn and achieve?

Across the school, teachers now plan more effectively for children's learning. Children are motivated and engage in their learning and most tasks provide appropriate challenge. Children work together more frequently in pairs and groups. They are showing citizenship and enterprise skills. For example, members of the eco committee organised a plant sale to raise funds for gardening equipment. Children's attainment has fluctuated recently but is now improving. Across the school children are able to talk confidently about aspects of their work. By P7, children are able to read fluently unfamiliar texts and talk knowledgeably about their favourite authors. At the early stages, children are making good progress in developing skills in writing. Older children are able to produce well-planned, descriptive pieces of writing. They now need to develop their writing skills across a range of curricular areas. The school has identified the need to further develop programmes to help children achieve this. By P7, children are confident in carrying out calculations mentally and are able to describe strategies they would use to solve problems. Staff are not yet providing two hours of good quality physical education for all children.

Staff are making good progress in improving children's curricular experiences. Teachers are working well together to develop *Curriculum for Excellence*. In the nursery class children now have more opportunities to develop their early writing skills across different areas of the playroom. Across the school, staff have developed programmes which enable children to develop appropriate skills and knowledge, for example, in science, social subjects, technologies, health and wellbeing and religious and moral education. Children now have good opportunities to use their information and communications technology skills across a range of curricular areas. The school should review daily timetables to ensure effective use of time throughout the day.

Staff have developed effective arrangements to meet the range of children's needs. The school now has clear procedures in place to identify and support children who need extra help in their learning. Staff work effectively with a range of other professionals to support children's learning. In most lessons tasks and activities are well matched to children's needs and provide an appropriate level of challenge. Children have a clearer understanding of what they need to do to improve their learning. Children have regular, appropriate homework.

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

Staff have developed effective partnerships with a range of agencies and individuals including the Community Development Trust, the Rotary Club and local businesses to help children progress in their learning. The Parent Council provides a high level of support for the school and has been involved in raising funds to support the work of the school. Parents have been consulted on aspects of the work of the school including homework and behaviour policies. The school communicates effectively with parents through newsletters, homework diaries and parents' evenings. The school deals appropriately with parental concerns and complaints.

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

Children take responsibility for aspects of the work of the school. They take part in the pupil council and members of the eco group encourage others to save energy and recycle materials. They have achieved an Eco-Schools Scotland award at silver level. At P1, children act as buddies to the children in the Nursery and children at P7 support P1 children throughout the year. Staff are committed to improving the school community. They are consulted on how to improve the school and feel that their views are acted on. The headteacher and principal teacher now monitor teachers' plans and give valuable feedback to help improve learners' experiences. The school now has more rigorous and systematic procedures in place to evaluate and improve learning and teaching.

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

Staff have further developed approaches to encourage children to work and behave well. They now have appropriately high expectations of children's attainment. Staff frequently acknowledge and celebrate children's achievements through wall displays, individual awards and at assemblies. The school continues to monitor children who are absent from school.

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

The headteacher is committed to the school and to improving the quality of children's experiences. With the support of the principal teacher and staff, she is establishing more effective arrangements for reviewing the quality of school work and children's experiences. Staff work together effectively to identify appropriate areas for improvement. This is having a positive effect on children's learning experiences. With the continuing support of the education authority, the school has the capacity to improve further.

8. What happens next?

There is evidence of significant improvement since the original inspection. The school now performs better overall. The quality of the curriculum and arrangements for improving the performance of the school and meeting learning needs are now at a satisfactory level or better. We shall make no further visits to the school in connection with the inspection report of September 2008. As part of the ongoing liaison between HMIE and the education authority, our District Inspector will continue to monitor the school's progress.

HM Inspector: Jacqueline Horsburgh
21 September 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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