

**Beaconhurst School
and Nursery Class
Bridge of Allan
11 March 2008**

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1. Background

Beaconhurst School and Nursery Class were inspected in November 2007. The inspection covered key aspects of the school's work at all stages. It evaluated the quality of the curriculum and pupils' achievements, including their performance in examinations (see Appendix 3). Inspectors also evaluated the quality of learning and teaching and pupil support, the environment for learning, the school's processes for self-evaluation, and its overall effectiveness and capacity for improvement. In the junior school, there was a particular focus on attainment in English language and mathematics. In the senior school, the subjects included in the inspection were English, mathematics, history and physical education. The evaluations in this report apply to provision in both the junior and senior schools.

HM Inspectors examined the quality of children's experience in the nursery, observed learning and teaching and examined pupils' work. They analysed responses to questionnaires issued to a sample of parents¹ and pupils and to all staff. They interviewed groups of pupils, including the pupil council, and staff. Members of the inspection team also spoke to the Chairman of the Board of Governors, and met representatives of the parent-teacher association (PTA) and groups of parents.

The school is an independent, coeducational school for children and pupils aged 3 to 18, situated in Bridge of Allan. At the time of the inspection, the roll was 399, with 42 in the nursery, 150 in the junior school and 207 in the senior school. Pupils from J1 to J6 were taught in the junior school. At J7, pupils in two transition classes were taught in the senior school by senior school teachers.

2. Key strengths

HM Inspectors identified the following key strengths.

- Children's experiences in the nursery and their progress in key aspects of their learning and development.
- The quality of independent thinking and personal responsibility for successful learning in the senior school.
- Pupils' attainment and wider achievements, and well-developed personal and social skills.
- Enthusiastic, motivated and mutually respectful children and pupils.
- The quality and responsiveness of learning support.
- Very effective partnerships with parents and the wider community.
- The headmaster's strategic leadership of the school.

¹ Throughout this report, the term 'parents' should be taken to include foster carers and carers who are relatives or friends.

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

Parents, pupils and staff were very positive about the school. Parents felt that the school was very committed to the care and welfare of their children. They thought that staff set high standards for children's and pupils' achievements and attainment. They felt welcome in the school and thought that the school kept them well informed. A few parents would like to have more information on how to help with homework. Some parents thought that the junior school could deal more effectively with inappropriate behaviour. Pupils thought that teachers explained things clearly and helped them when they had difficulties with their work. They felt safe and secure in school. A few pupils thought that some teachers could listen more to what they had to say outside the classroom. Staff enjoyed working at the school and appreciated pupils' enthusiasm about their learning. Parents and staff thought the school was well led.

Further details about what most pleased parents, staff and pupils, and what they would most like to see improved, can be found in Appendix 2 of this report.

4. How good are learning, teaching and achievement?

The curriculum, learning and teaching

The very good curriculum was suitably broad and challenging. It met the school's aim of providing integrated and enriching learning experiences to meet pupils' individual needs very well.

In the nursery, staff engaged children in a wide range of activities and play experiences to stimulate and enhance their learning. Particular strengths included learning outdoors, children's engagement in recycling and nature activities, and attention to health and wellbeing. In the junior school, specialist teaching enhanced the curriculum in physical education (PE), music, art, drama, information and communications technology (ICT) and modern languages. Recently improved programmes for spelling and grammar helped pupils develop their writing skills. A new mathematics programme was helping to improve pupils' numeracy skills. Well-judged approaches to teaching history, science and modern languages ensured that pupils made steady progress in these subjects at all stages. This prepared them very well for their learning in the senior school. The school had a comprehensive personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme. Within this, it provided all pupils from J4 to J6 with a residential Activities Week. This experience developed their fitness, teamwork, practical problem solving skills and personal and social skills.

In the senior school, the curriculum helped pupils to make very good progress in their learning. Teachers helped pupils develop their citizenship and enterprise skills further. From Transition to S4, almost all pupils studied two modern languages. The school provided all pupils with over two hours of PE each week. It supplemented this with regular opportunities for pupils to engage in additional sporting activities. At S3/S4, almost all pupils studied eight subjects at Standard Grade or its equivalent. A small number of pupils took seven examination courses and had additional learning support to better meet their needs. At S3 to S6, pupils benefited from non-certificated courses in ICT applications and PSHE. All pupils at S4 to S6 were involved in an expressive arts programme. It helped them to develop a wide range of performance, production and media skills. Building on junior school experiences, the school involved all

pupils at S3 in challenging outdoor education activities. At S5/S6, pupils had very good opportunities to make progress in their learning. The school responded flexibly to their course preferences.

The overall quality of teaching was very good and, in several lessons, was outstanding. Teachers were well organised and planned lessons effectively. Throughout the school, teachers interacted very well and very sensitively with children and pupils. They used questions skilfully to check and reinforce children's and pupils' learning. Almost all teachers used praise effectively and valued pupils' ideas and suggestions. They explained the purposes of lessons clearly, and how pupils could achieve success. They had very high expectations of what pupils could achieve. They used a range of effective approaches to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding. In the junior school, teachers did not always build well on the active learning experiences of children in the nursery. In the senior school, almost all teachers made effective use of ICT to motivate pupils and enhance lessons. This approach was not as well developed in the junior school. Across the school, teachers made very effective use of homework to extend and consolidate pupils' learning.

Nursery children had positive attitudes to learning and worked well independently and in groups. They were making very good progress in all areas of their learning and development. Children solved simple problems and were developing their understanding of growth and change through the cultivation of plants, and early scientific investigation. They were confident in role-play, making music and expressing their individual creativity in paintings and collage. Some children were notably confident in their use of computers. In the outdoor area, children played energetically, gaining an appropriate awareness of space and safe practices in physical activity. Across the junior school, pupils were highly motivated, enthusiastic and confident learners. They worked very well without close supervision. Stimulating displays of pupils' work celebrated their success and created a motivating environment for learning. Pupils responded very positively to challenging tasks when given the opportunity. On these occasions they were actively involved in their learning. Well-organised opportunities to develop their own views and explore the opinions of others enhanced pupils' learning, especially in the senior school. Pupils worked together very effectively and creatively to reflect on ideas and issues in lessons. The pace of learning was generally very good. At S1/S2, pupils' learning took very good account of their prior knowledge and skills from the junior school. Across the school, some pupils demonstrated an outstanding level of independent thinking and learning. They exceeded the expectations of challenging tasks set by their teachers and reached their own, often innovative, conclusions.

Achievement in English language and mathematics in the nursery and junior school

English language

All children in the nursery were making very good progress in communication and language. They listened carefully to instructions from adults, enjoyed listening to stories and talked readily about different layouts and illustrations in books. Almost all used language confidently when talking to one another and to adults. Most children were developing early writing skills. In the junior school, the overall quality of pupils' attainment in English language was very good. Pupils' attainment in listening, talking, reading and writing had remained consistently high over a number of years. Almost all achieved national levels in reading and writing. At all stages, many pupils were achieving these levels earlier than might normally be expected. Pupils were making very good progress in their coursework. However, this was not always sufficiently challenging.

Those pupils with additional support needs were well supported and were making very good progress from their prior levels of attainment. Pupils in the early stages of the junior school would benefit from further opportunities to develop their listening and talking skills. At all stages, pupils listened very well to adults and to one another. Almost all expressed their views and opinions clearly and confidently and contributed very well to group discussions. Pupils read fluently for a variety of purposes and were skilled in analysing texts. Standards of writing across the school were high and pupils wrote well. They took pride in presenting their written work. They were not always confident in their use of grammar and punctuation.

Mathematics

Children in the nursery classes were making very good progress in early mathematics. They could count, sort, match and make patterns. Older children were developing a good understanding of numbers. Almost all children identified and used simple mathematical shapes to solve problems during play. In the junior school, the quality of pupils' attainment in mathematics was very good. It had improved in recent years. At all stages, many pupils were achieving national attainment levels earlier than might normally be expected. Pupils with additional support needs were well supported and were making very good progress from their prior levels of attainment. Pupils carried out surveys and displayed their findings in a variety of charts and graphs. They had begun to use ICT effectively to display their work. Across all stages, pupils' oral and written calculations were confident and accurate. At J4, pupils could describe the properties of two- and three-dimensional shapes and, by J6, they had an appropriate understanding of angles and coordinates. Pupils were developing their knowledge about problem solving and now needed more opportunities to apply their mathematical skills in practical situations.

Achievement in the senior school

Pupils in the transition classes were making very good progress in their coursework, especially in history, science and modern languages. The overall quality of attainment at S1/S2 was excellent. Pupils were making very good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Some made outstanding progress. Across the curriculum, pupils at Transition to S2 used their prior learning very effectively and responded very well to challenging tasks. They had high aspirations and regularly produced work of a very high standard.

The following comments are based on Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) data, using the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF)² for the three year period 2005-2007, and also draw on the overall evaluations of the quality of learning, teaching and meeting pupils' needs.

The overall quality of attainment at S3/S4 was excellent. The proportion of pupils attaining five or more Credit awards at Standard Grade was consistently well above national averages. Boys' attainment was consistently very strong at this level.

² Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) levels:

7: Advanced Higher at A-C/CSYS at A-C

6: Higher at A-C

5: Intermediate 2 at A-C; Standard Grade at 1-2

4: Intermediate 1 at A-C; Standard Grade at 3-4

3: Access 3 cluster; Standard Grade at 5-6

The overall quality of attainment at S5/S6 was excellent. The proportions of pupils at both S5 and S6 achieving one or more, three or more and five or more A-C grades at SCQF level 6 were consistently well above the national average. At S6, the proportion of pupils achieving one or more A-C grades at SCQF level 7 was consistently well above the national average.

Achievement across the school

In the nursery and across the school, children and pupils demonstrated their wider achievements very effectively in a range of contexts. Children's activities in the nursery garden had given them the confidence to play a leading part in the school's plans to achieve Eco School Scotland status. All pupils at J3 learned to swim. As they grew older, some went on to swim at a very high standard of competition. Across the school, pupils' participation in school productions developed specific talents, effective teamwork and high levels of responsibility. Their commitment to the school's outdoor education programmes also helped them develop resourcefulness and independence. Lunch time activities, such as the popular junior school model club, allowed pupils to demonstrate their creativity and problem solving skills. At J6, pupils sang melodiously and in close harmony in the choir. Pupils in the speech club had won local competitions for their very effective recitations. The senior school jazz band performed very successfully at prestigious local and national events. Pupils had gained a wide variety of sporting achievements. Individual and team successes included hockey, tae kwon do, golf, fencing, show jumping and handball. Following their outdoor education experience, all pupils at S3 achieved an expedition award at Duke of Edinburgh bronze level. Senior pupils were developing effective leadership skills. They had taken increasing responsibility for managing house events and had organised a very successful social evening. The heads of school, prefects and pupil council members contributed well to school decision-making.

Learning and teaching in the senior school inspected subjects

English

Teachers organised lessons well to provide a variety of learning experiences. They gave clear instructions to pupils and shared the purposes of lessons well. They almost always set high expectations for the amount and quality of work pupils should produce. Open questions and teachers' encouraging attitude helped develop pupils' thinking skills. Challenging tasks and texts met pupils' needs effectively. Teachers provided prompt feedback to help pupils identify their strengths and how to improve. Pupils responded enthusiastically and very effectively to opportunities to be active in their learning. They maintained a brisk and effective pace of learning. In most lessons, pupils' commitment and independent thinking created an outstanding quality of learning. At all stages, they composed well-structured individual writing pieces and very effective collaborative reports.

Teaching and meeting needs were very good. The quality of pupils' learning experiences was excellent. The overall quality of attainment was very good. Particular features included the following.

- By the end of S2, pupils' listening and talking skills were very well developed.
- At S4, the proportion of pupils attaining Credit awards was consistently well above the national average.
- At S5, most pupils at Intermediate 2 attained A or B grades.
- Most pupils at S5 and S6 attained A-C grades at Higher.

Mathematics

Teachers gave very clear explanations. They made effective use of questioning to develop pupils' understanding and challenge their thinking. Their very effective use of interactive whiteboards enhanced most lessons. Well-judged support for learning and teachers' prompt feedback on progress helped meet pupils' needs very well. All pupils worked hard and responded well to teachers' high expectations of pace and level of work. Pupils were confident and enthusiastic about their learning and made use of regular homework and tests to identify their next steps in learning. At all stages, they developed their mathematical skills further by taking part in a range of extra-curricular mathematics activities and competitions.

Overall the quality of teaching, learning and meeting pupils' needs was very good. The overall quality of attainment was very good. Particular features included the following.

- By the end of S2, pupils were making very good progress in their suitably challenging coursework.
- By the end of S3, almost all pupils presented at Intermediate 1 attained A-C grades.
- At S4, the proportion of pupils attaining A-C grades at Intermediate 2 was well above the national average.
- At S5/S6, most pupils attained A to C grades at Higher and Advanced Higher.

History

Teachers' skilful use of questioning helped explain new ideas very well and developed pupils' understanding very effectively. Teachers organised homework very well, carefully linked to pupils' work in the classroom. Almost all tasks matched individuals' needs very well. Pupils benefited from well-planned and challenging tasks and activities and from the brisk pace of lessons. They completed coursework conscientiously and were engaged very actively in their learning.

Overall, the quality of teaching, learning and meeting pupils' needs was very good. Attainment was very good. Particular features included the following.

- By the end of S2, almost all pupils had made very good progress in their coursework. A few made excellent progress. They developed skills learned in the junior school very well, particularly in extended writing and using historical sources.
- At S4, almost all pupils attained Credit awards.
- At S5/S6, most pupils attained A-C grades at Higher. Most pupils at Intermediate 2, and all at Advanced Higher, attained A-C grades.
- A trip to the Belgian battlefields, and fundraising to help renovate the local war memorial, developed a very good understanding of local and national heritage among most senior pupils.

Physical education

Teachers valued pupils' contributions to lessons and used praise effectively. Teaching approaches ensured that pupils were actively engaged in their learning. To support further improvement, teachers should help pupils to use their increasing range of skills more widely, and to take more responsibility for improving their performance. There was scope for greater use of ICT to enhance teaching and learning. Teachers used their detailed knowledge of pupils well to meet individual needs and to build on prior learning. They promoted a culture of achievement for all and provided a variety of opportunities for pupils to consolidate and extend their skills. Occasionally, lessons did not provide appropriate challenge for more able pupils. Almost all pupils were enthusiastic, motivated and well-behaved. They worked well with minimum supervision and collaborated effectively.

The quality of teaching and learning was good. Meeting needs was very good. The overall quality of attainment was good. Particular features included the following:

- By the end of S2, pupils were performing well and made good progress from prior levels of attainment.
- At Standard Grade, all pupils attained a General or Credit award.
- At S5, all of the small number of pupils at Higher and almost all at Intermediate 2 attained A or B grades.
- Pupils developed their physical fitness and teamworking skills effectively by participating in a range of sports activities at the end of the school day and a challenging outdoor education experience.

5. How well are pupils supported?

The commitment of staff to the pastoral care of pupils was of a very high standard. In the nursery, staff were very caring and responsive to children. Staff encouraged children and pupils

to look after themselves and to enjoy healthy meals and snacks. Pupils across the school were confident that if they reported any concerns, staff would deal with them appropriately. All staff had received appropriate training in child protection and were alert to their responsibilities towards protecting children and pupils. They were very aware of the physical, social and emotional needs of individual pupils. The school had appropriate arrangements for the administration of medicines and the safe use of the Internet. The school's policy, under the requirements of the Education (Disability Strategies and Pupils' Records) (Scotland) Act, included a detailed review of its approaches to improving accessibility.

The quality of pupils' personal and social development was a key strength of the school. Pupils were developing very good citizenship skills, informed attitudes and personal responsibility. The mixed-stage registration system in the senior school enabled pupils to form helpful social and mutually supportive relationships. Pupils were articulate, confident, showed independence and cooperated with others in a range of settings. Their behaviour showed genuine concern for and tolerance of others. The school's very good PSHE programme ensured appropriate progression in pupils' learning. The programme included a range of stimulating speakers, which enhanced pupils' experiences. The school's active promotion of extra-curricular activities helped to develop personal confidence and positive attitudes to healthy living and teamwork. A systematic monitoring system enabled pupils to record their achievements. This provided a helpful basis of discussion of personal goals and progress during tutor meetings.

In the senior school, curricular and vocational guidance was very good. The school had a good range of well-targeted approaches to advise pupils, including strong links with external careers officers. Notable features included informative course choice booklets and a very effective careers programme. Pupils also had access to a very helpful computer-based system of careers guidance, which they could continue to use after they left school. House tutors, year tutors, parents and pupils were fully involved in decisions about course choices. All S5 pupils took part in work experience. The school also gave a high priority to developing pupils' enterprise skills. This was particularly effective in S5 and S6 where pupils engaged in challenging Young Enterprise activities. Tutors gave effective support to senior pupils applying for higher education.

In the nursery and throughout the school, teachers made effective use of an appropriate range of approaches to meet learning needs. Nursery staff knew children very well. They used assessment information effectively to plan learning and to provide appropriate activities. These approaches supported children's very good progress. Across the school, teachers gave helpful and regular feedback to pupils during lessons. They provided additional support for groups and individuals at lunch times and after school. They made good use of information gained from assessments to help pupils plan how to improve their work further. Increasingly, they were encouraging pupils to assess their own progress systematically and set targets for improvement. A major strength of the school was the very sensitive and positive support given to pupils with additional support needs, by staff and other pupils. The close and effective working relationship between learning support staff in the junior and senior school ensured appropriate continuity in pupils' progress. Regular reviews of pupils' progress allowed staff to target support effectively. Learning support staff provided teachers with comprehensive information, both on the needs of individual pupils and strategies to help them in class. Support staff made a very positive and effective contribution to pupils' learning. Pupils with individualised educational programmes (IEPs) were making very good progress in their learning. The school was improving the development of targets within IEPs to provide pupils with a better range of short and longer-term goals.

The senior tutor with responsibility for pastoral care in the senior school carried out her remit very effectively. She was highly respected by pupils, staff and parents.

6. How good is the environment for learning?

Aspect	Comment
Quality of accommodation and facilities	<p>The school's very good accommodation and facilities provided a motivating environment for learning. The recently built classroom block, PE facilities and dining room had further enhanced the quality of pupils' experiences. Children in the nursery had ready access to stimulating facilities for outdoor learning. Pupils in the junior school benefited from lessons in specialist teaching areas of the senior school. Accommodation in the junior school was cramped and limited opportunities for active approaches to learning. The school was situated on a hilly site and did not provide disabled access to all parts of the campus. At the beginning and end of the day, the lower car park became very congested as parents dropped off and collected their children. This was a potential hazard for pupils. The school was aware of the issue and was working to improve the situation.</p>
Climate and relationships, expectations and promoting achievement and equality	<p>The quality of the school's climate and relationships was excellent. Pupils, staff and parents identified very strongly with the school and were very proud of its achievements. Morale was very high across the school. Children, pupils and staff, especially those in reception, had created an environment where parents and visitors felt very welcome. High levels of commitment by pupils and staff to activities beyond the school day further strengthened very positive working relationships. Children and pupils responded very well to the high expectations staff set for their progress, achievements and attainment. Across the school, staff used attractive displays of children's and pupils' work to celebrate their achievements effectively. Staff actively promoted inclusion, equality and fairness. Pupils and staff were notably respectful of individual needs and differences. Aspects of the curriculum and assemblies helped pupils develop an awareness of diversity and the needs of others. The school provided regular and appropriate opportunities for religious observance.</p>

Aspect	Comment
Partnership with parents and the community	<p>The school had developed excellent partnerships with parents, the PTA, and the wider community. Parents had regular formal and informal opportunities to discuss their children's progress. Open days and evenings, interesting newsletters and helpful reports kept parents very well informed of the school's activities. The PTA actively supported a wide range of school events and fundraising projects. The school consulted parents appropriately on aspects of the curriculum, including health education. It had run a very successful workshop evening to introduce parents to the new mathematics programme in the junior school.</p> <p>Partnerships with local businesses helped widen pupils' horizons as part of education for enterprise, citizenship and employment. The school's effective links with Stirling University provided pupils with a very high quality of sports facilities and coaching. Former pupils also helped with coaching. Pupils maintained regular links with the local and wider community through their musical performances, sporting activities and work for charities. Their efforts to support the renovation of the war memorial in Bridge of Allan had strengthened links with the local community further.</p>

7. Improving the school

Beaconhurst School and Nursery Class provided children and pupils with a very good quality of education, with features of excellence. Enriching and challenging experiences helped children and pupils to be successful in a wide range of activities, within and beyond the school day. Staff were highly committed to the care and welfare of children and pupils. They used their detailed knowledge of children and pupils to meet individual needs very effectively and sensitively. Staff across the school helped pupils to set high expectations. Pupils were confident, curious and enthusiastic in their learning. At times, they worked beyond the expectations of the tasks set by teachers and demonstrated excellent learning.

The headmaster had been in post for just over two years. He provided very effective leadership. His clear and well-judged strategic vision for the school was successfully helping to build leadership capacity across the staff. Pupils, staff and parents held him in high regard. His enthusiastic teaching was a model of good practice. He knew pupils well and was well-attuned to individual interests and needs. He worked closely with staff with additional responsibilities to set consistently high standards of provision across the school. The deputy supported the headmaster and staff very well. She responded very effectively to pupils' course choices. The senior tutor, head of upper school and heads of houses supported school improvements ably. The senior teacher in the junior school demonstrated very good teaching practices and leadership. A strong feature of her effective management of the junior school was her well-organised approach to curriculum development. The manager of the nursery provided very good leadership to her team of staff.

The school had made a good start at systematic approaches to monitoring and evaluating the quality of its work. The headmaster had involved all staff in identifying the school's strengths and development needs. This approach linked closely to appropriately planned professional development. Staff had agreed and met the targets in the first school action plan. Commendably, pupils had taken responsibility for improvements in aspects of ethos in the second cycle of action planning. Staff should now focus improvement planning more rigorously on learning and teaching, in particular to develop existing outstanding features consistently across the school. As a result of staff commitment to continuous improvement and the headmaster's strong leadership, the school was very well placed to maintain high quality provision and to further improve its work.

Appendix 1 provides HM Inspectors' overall evaluation of the work of the school.

Main points for action

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

- improve approaches to active learning in the early stages of the junior school to ensure appropriate continuity in pupils' learning and development from nursery; and
- develop further the involvement of staff in planning for improvement, with a particular focus on sharing effective practice in learning and teaching.

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 Board of Governors 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. Within two years of the publication of this report the Board of Governors, working with the school, will provide a progress report to parents.

Mary Ritchie
Managing Inspector (Senior School)

Anne McGachey
Managing Inspector (Junior School)

11 March 2008

Appendix 1 Indicators of quality

The sections in the table below follow the order in this report. You can find the main comments made about each of the quality indicators in those sections. However, aspects of some quality indicators are relevant to other sections of the report and may also be mentioned in those other sections.

How good are learning, teaching and achievement?	
Structure of the curriculum	very good
The teaching process	very good
Pupils' learning experiences	very good
Meeting pupils' needs	very good
Pupils' attainment in English language in the junior school	very good
Pupils' attainment in mathematics in the junior school	very good
Overall quality of attainment: S1/S2	excellent
Overall quality of attainment: S3/S4	excellent
Overall quality of attainment: S5/S6	excellent

How well are pupils supported?	
Pastoral care	very good
Personal and social development	excellent
Curricular and vocational guidance	very good
Learning support	very good

How good is the environment for learning?	
Accommodation and facilities	very good
Climate and relationships	excellent
Expectations and promoting achievement	very good
Equality and fairness	very good
Partnership with parents, the Board of Governors and the community	excellent

Improving the school	
Leadership	very good
Effectiveness and deployment of staff with additional responsibilities	very good
Self-evaluation	good

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
adequate	strengths just out weigh weaknesses
weak	important weaknesses
unsatisfactory	major weaknesses

Appendix 2 Summary of questionnaire responses

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

What parents thought the school did well	What parents think the school could do better
<p>Overall, parents were very positive about the school. For example, almost all thought that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • their child enjoyed being at school; • the school responded effectively when they raised concerns; • staff made them feel welcome; and • the school was well led. 	<p>Some parents thought that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the school could do more to explain its priorities for improving pupils' education; • staff could provide more information on how to help with homework; and • the school could deal with instances of inappropriate behaviour in the junior school better.
What pupils thought the school did well	What pupils think the school could do better
<p>Almost all pupils thought that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • teachers helped them when they had difficulties; • teachers were good at letting them know how to improve their work; • the school helped them to stay safe and healthy; and • they got on well with other pupils. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A few pupils in the senior school would like more of a say in decision-making. • A few pupils in the junior school thought that the behaviour of some pupils could be better.
What staff thought the school did well	What staff think the school could do better
<p>Staff were very positive about almost all aspects of the school. For example, they thought that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • there was a high degree of mutual respect between pupils and staff; • pupils were enthusiastic about their learning; • staff worked hard to maintain good relations with the local community; • pupils' successes were celebrated regularly; and • the school was well led. 	<p>A small number of staff:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • would like to be more fully involved in decision-making; and • thought that time for professional development could be used better.

Appendix 3 Attainment in Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) National Qualifications

Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) levels:

7: Advanced Higher at A-C/CSYS at A-C

6: Higher at A-C

5: Intermediate 2 at A-C; Standard Grade at 1-2

4: Intermediate 1 at A-C; Standard Grade at 3-4

3: Access 3 Cluster; Standard Grade at 5-6

Percentage of relevant S4 roll attaining by end of S4

		2005	2006	2007 ³
English and Mathematics @ Level 3	Beaconhurst School	83	75	94
	National	90	91	91
5+ @ Level 3 or better	Beaconhurst School	100	92	97
	National	90	91	91
5+ @ Level 4 or better	Beaconhurst School	100	98	94
	National	76	77	75
5+ @ Level 5 or better	Beaconhurst School	83	71	82
	National	34	35	32

Percentage of relevant S4 roll attaining by end of S5

		2005	2006	2007 ³
5+ @ Level 4 or better	Beaconhurst School	110	100	96
	National	78	78	79
5+ @ Level 5 or better	Beaconhurst School	100	95	92
	National	45	45	46
1+ @ Level 6 or better	Beaconhurst School	85	63	63
	National	39	38	38
3+ @ Level 6 or better	Beaconhurst School	55	46	42
	National	23	22	22
5+ @ Level 6 or better	Beaconhurst School	40	21	17
	National	10	10	9

Percentage of relevant S4 roll attaining by end of S6

		2005	2006	2007³
5+ @ Level 5 or better	Beaconhurst School	89	105	96
	National	47	48	47
1+ @ Level 6 or better	Beaconhurst School	72	90	71
	National	43	43	42
3+ @ Level 6 or better	Beaconhurst School	61	65	54
	National	30	30	29
5+ @ Level 6 or better	Beaconhurst School	33	55	38
	National	19	20	19
1+ @ Level 7 or better	Beaconhurst School	22	40	33
	National	12	13	12

4

³ Pre Appeal

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 Chairperson of the Board of Governors and appropriate Members of the Scottish Parliament. Subject to availability, further copies may be obtained free of charge from HM Inspectorate of Education, Greyfriars House, Gallowgate, Aberdeen AB10 1LQ or by telephoning 01224 642544. Copies are also available on our website www.hmie.gov.uk.

HMIE feedback and complaints procedure

Should you wish to comment on any aspect of independent all-through inspections, you should write in the first instance to Kenneth Muir, HMCI, HM Inspectorate of Education, Denholm House, Almondvale Business Park, Almondvale Way, Livingston EH54 6GA.

If you have a concern about this report, you should write in the first instance to our Complaints Manager, HMIE Business Management and Communications Team, Second Floor, Denholm House, Almondvale Business Park, Almondvale Way, Livingston EH54 6GA. You can also e-mail HMIEComplaints@hmie.gsi.gov.uk. A copy of our complaints procedure is available from this office or by telephoning 01506 600200 or from our website at www.hmie.gov.uk.

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 (SPSO). The SPSO is fully independent and has powers to investigate complaints about Government departments and agencies. You should write to SPSO, Freepost EH641, Edinburgh EH3 0BR. You can also telephone 0800 377 7330, fax 0800 377 7331 or e-mail: ask@sps.org.uk. More information about the Ombudsman's office can be obtained from the website: www.sps.org.uk

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