

Education, Children and Families Committee

Sub-committee on Standards for Children and Families

2 pm, Monday, 10 February 2014

Primary School Inspection at Liberton Primary School and Nursery Class

Item number	4.3
Report number	
Wards	Ward 16: Liberton/Gilmerton Ward 15: Southside/Newington

Links

Coalition pledges	PO5
Council outcomes	CO2
Single Outcome Agreement	SO3

Gillian Tee

Director of Children and Families

Contact: Karen Prophet, Senior Education Manager (Schools, Quality and Curriculum)

E-mail: Karen.prophet@edinburgh.gov.uk | Tel: 0131 469 3048

Executive summary

Primary School Inspection at Liberton Primary School and Nursery Class

Summary

- Members should be aware that Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMIE), now known as Education Scotland (ES), undertake an annual sample of inspections across Scotland (approximately 240 per year) covering nursery, primary, special and secondary schools. A letter to parents/carers on each inspection is published approximately three months after the inspection. On the basis of this letter the school with the support of the authority amends its improvement plan to take account of any agreed areas for improvement.
- Inspectors usually revisit a school within a year of the publication of the letter where weak or unsatisfactory practice has been identified. For all other schools inspected the local authority will inform the parents about the progress made in improving the quality of education.
- This letter (Appendix 1) and evaluations (Appendix 2) advises the Sub-committee on the outcomes of the initial inspection.

Recommendations

The Sub-committee is requested to:

- note the findings of the report including the areas where the education authority and the school should continue to improve the school and the nursery class; and
- receive an authority inspection follow through report.

Measures of success

The report identified the following key strengths:

- children who are well motivated, engaged and keen to learn;
- the overall quality of pastoral care and support for children; and
- aspects of learning and the range of opportunities being developed, such as the use of the outdoor area, to enable children to achieve more.

Financial impact

There are no financial implications contained in the ES report.

Equalities impact

There are considered to be no infringements of the rights of the child.

Tracking of pupil performance by gender and Black Minority Ethnic (BME) is undertaken at school level and there are no adverse impacts.

Sustainability impact

None.

Consultation and engagement

Parents, pupils and staff completed an ES questionnaire prior to the inspection.

Background reading / external references

<http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/inspectionandreview/reports>

Gillian Tee

Director of Children and Families

Links

Coalition pledges	PO5
Council outcomes	CO2
Single Outcome Agreement	SO3
Appendices	1. Inspection letter to parent/carer 2. Evaluations

29 October 2013

Appendix 1

Dear Parent/Carer

**Liberton Primary School and Nursery Class
The City of Edinburgh Council**

Recently, as you may know, my colleagues and I inspected your child's school. During our visit, we talked to parents and children and worked closely with the headteacher and staff. We wanted to find out how well children are learning and achieving and how well the school supports children to do their best. The headteacher shared with us the school's successes and priorities for improvement. We looked at some particular aspects of the school's recent work, including approaches to developing leadership skills across the school. As a result, we were able to find out how good the school is at improving children's education.

How well do children learn and achieve?

In the nursery class, almost all children are interested and engage well in the activities which they have chosen. They achieve well and have good opportunities to develop and apply their learning. They do this around the playroom and in the outside area on a regular basis and also in the local community and beyond. Examples include visits to Gorgie City Farm and the development of children's art skills. Older children in the nursery, for example, can use a range of materials to create very good art work.

From P1 to P7, almost all children are well motivated and eager to learn. This is reflected in, for example, their participation in cooperative learning and their responses when presented with learning which is demanding and challenging. Children are keen to research and gather information to support their learning and to discuss and share their ideas. There is room to develop children's skills in learning more consistently and creatively across the school. This could include, for example, the more effective use of feedback on what needs improvement, the use of information and communications technology and a clearer focus on developing and deepening children's thinking.

Overall, children are making good progress in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. Almost all children can explain their thinking through discussion and can share key ideas from texts. They read for pleasure and almost all are fluent and expressive readers. Children at all stages are developing and using effective vocabulary and achieving well in writing. Children are learning how to apply what they learn in mathematics to everyday contexts. Across all stages, children's skills in solving mathematical problems are developing well.

Children are able to discuss aspects of health and wellbeing with confidence and understand the role they can play in bringing about improvements in the school. This ensures that children feel included and safe. Children at all stages are able to make choices that will best support a healthy lifestyle, including the importance of being physically active. Children are making good progress across some other areas of the curriculum. For example, children are developing a very good appreciation of music across the school. This includes regular whole-school singing sessions. A number of children benefit from instrumental instruction and use this well to add value to the musical life of the school. Children's achievements overall are recognised and celebrated across the school.

How well does the school support children to develop and learn?

Staff pay very good attention to the pastoral care of children. Before children start nursery, staff successfully use PEEP (Parent Early Education Partnership) approaches with children and their families. Children are very well supported when moving from nursery to P1. Children feel safe and cared for in school and are confident that staff will provide assistance and support as required. Aspects of the practice to support children with additional short- or long-term needs are very strong. This includes, for example, very effective partnership working. We have asked teachers to make sure children's learning needs are met more consistently by ensuring they provide suitable levels of pace and challenge in lessons. Staff have made good progress over the past year in implementing important aspects of Curriculum for Excellence but there is a need to increase the overall pace of change. Overall, staff provide a variety of learning opportunities for children. This includes the developing use of the outdoor area surrounding the school, and opportunities such as Benmore residential centre and Forest Schools approaches. The outdoors area linked to the nursery provides a stimulating learning environment which is being well used.

How well does the school improve the quality of its work?

In his two years in post, the headteacher has worked very effectively with the whole staff team to identify what the school needs to do to improve. Staff have put a range of appropriate approaches in place to evaluate their own work. This includes seeking feedback from yourselves as parents on aspects such as how best to share information about your children's learning and progress. Many of these approaches are still at an early stage of development and are not yet having a significant impact on children's experiences and achievements. The headteacher is very well supported by the depute headteachers and the principal teacher. They work very well together to develop and support staff confidence and leadership across the school. Relationships with the Parent Council are good and provide a strong basis on which to develop the greater involvement of you, as parents, in supporting your children's learning and wider school improvement. Parents support the work of the nursery very well through, for example, raising the funds needed to create the outdoor learning area. Children's views are gathered in a variety of ways and are taken well into account. The school environment has been improved as a direct result of suggestions from the pupil council. Building on the strong ethos of support and the leadership skills now being developed, the staff, children and parents of Liberton Primary School are well positioned to take forward further improvement.

This inspection found the following key strengths.

- Children who are well motivated, engaged and keen to learn.
- The overall quality of pastoral care and support for children.
- Aspects of learning and the range of opportunities being developed, such as the use of the outdoor area, to enable children to achieve more.

We discussed with staff and the City of Edinburgh Council how they might continue to improve the school and nursery class. This is what we agreed with them.

- Increase the pace of implementation of Curriculum for Excellence.
- Continue to focus on improving consistency in the quality of learning.
- Ensure that the school's approaches to self-evaluation support all staff and learners to focus on learning and achievement.

What happens at the end of the inspection?

We are satisfied with the overall quality of provision. We are confident that most of the school's self-evaluation processes are leading to improvements. Our Area Lead Officer will work with the City of Edinburgh Council to build capacity for improvement and will maintain contact to monitor progress. Parents will be informed of the extent to which the school has improved.

Joan MacKay
HM Inspector

Additional inspection evidence, such as details of the quality indicator evaluations, for your school can be found on the Education Scotland website at <http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/inspectionandreview/reports/school/primsec/LibertonPrimarySchoolEdinburghCity.asp>

If you would like to receive this letter in a different format, for example, in a translation please contact the administration team on the above telephone number.

If you want to give us feedback or make a complaint about our work, please contact us by telephone on 0141 282 5000, or e-mail: complaints@educationscotland.gsi.gov.uk or write to us addressing your letter to the Complaints Manager, Denholm House, Almondvale Business Park, Livingston EH54 6GA.

Quality indicators help schools, education authorities and inspectors to judge what is good and what needs to be improved in the work of the school. You can find these quality indicators in the publication *How good is our school?*¹. Quality indicators for the nursery class can be found in the publication *Child at the Centre*². 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 are doing.

Here are the evaluations for Liberton Primary School.

Improvements in performance	good
Learners' experiences	good
Meeting learning needs	good

Nursery class

Improvements in performance	good
Children's experiences	good
Meeting learning needs	good

We also evaluated the following aspects of the work of the school and nursery class.

The curriculum	satisfactory
Improvement through self-evaluation	satisfactory

A copy of the full letter is available on the Education Scotland website at <http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/inspectionandreview/reports/school/primsec/LibertonPrimarySchoolEdinburghCity.asp>

¹ *How good is our school? The Journey to Excellence: part 3*, HM Inspectorate of Education, 2007, http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/Images/HowgoodisourschoolJtEpart3_tcm4-684258.pdf.

² *The Child at the Centre (2), Self-Evaluation in the early years*, HM Inspectorate of Education, 2007, http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/inspectionandreview/Images/catcseey_tcm4-712692.pdf. Please note that the term "adequate" in these documents has been replaced with "satisfactory".