

Education, Children and Families Committee

Sub-committee on Standards for Children and Families

2.30 pm, Monday 30 November 2015

Pre-School Inspection of Tynecastle Nursery School

Item number	5.1
Report number	
Wards	Ward 7: Sighthill/Gorgie

Links

Coalition pledges	PO5
Council outcomes	CO2
Single Outcome Agreement	SO3

Gillian Tee

Executive Director of Communities and Families

Contact: Aileen Mclean, Senior Education Manager (Early Years)

E-mail: aileen.mclean@edinburgh.gov.uk | Tel: 0131 469 3300

Executive summary

Pre-School Inspection of Tynecastle Nursery School

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 area where the education authority and the pre-school establishment should continue to improve the pre-school establishment.

Measures of success

The report identified the following key strengths:

- confident, enthusiastic children who are making very good progress in their learning;
- high quality children's experiences;
- children's progress in early numeracy;
- highly skilled staff team who are caring, nurturing and work extremely well together, alongside parents to meet children's learning needs; and

- the strong and inspirational leadership of the headteacher and her commitment to securing the very best outcomes for children and families.

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

Executive Director of Communities and Families

Links

Coalition pledges	PO5
Council outcomes	CO2
Single Outcome Agreement	SO3
Appendices	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Inspection letter to parent/carer 2. Evaluations



15 September 2015

Dear Parent/Carer

**Tynecastle Nursery School
The City of Edinburgh Council**

Recently, as you may know, my colleague and I visited and inspected your child's early learning and childcare setting. Throughout our visit we talked to parents and children and we worked closely with the headteacher and staff. We wanted to find out how well children were learning and achieving and how well the early learning and childcare setting supported children to do their best. The headteacher shared with us the early learning and childcare setting's successes and priorities for improvement. We looked at some particular aspects of the early learning and childcare setting's recent work including initiatives to support early numeracy. As a result, we were able to find out how good the early learning and childcare setting was at improving children's education. I would now like to tell you what we found.

How well do children learn and achieve?

Tynecastle Nursery School is an exceptional environment for children to play, grow and learn. Your child is clearly at the heart of the setting. It is a relaxed, calm and purposeful oasis within the city. Children show high levels of motivation and independence as they enthusiastically use the indoor and outdoor space to help them learn. They confidently lead their learning by making choices about where they want to play, thoughtfully gathering the resources and materials they require to help them learn. Children are absorbed in their play for extended periods of time. They are curious and inquisitive with a strong desire to find out more. Staff are highly skilled. They provide the right amount of support to help children research areas of interest and deepen their learning using books, the internet or visiting places within the local community. Staff treat children with respect. Their views are listened to, truly valued and taken into account. Children are confident talking about their learning and experiences through the use of individual electronic learning journals and learning logs. They identify what they would like to do next including setting themselves challenges during physical play. As a result, children are becoming aware of themselves as learners.

Education Scotland
Denholm House
Almondvale Business Park
Almondvale Way
Livingston
EH54 6GA

T 01506 600370
F 01506 600313
E eyfp@educationscotland.gsi.gov.uk

Textphone 01506 600236

This is a service for deaf users. Please do not use this number for voice calls as this will not connect.

www.educationscotland.gov.uk

Transforming lives through learning

Children are making very good progress in their learning. Most are confident communicators and will readily initiate and engage in conversation with their peers and adults. Gathering times are helping all children to develop really good listening skills and to understand about taking turns during conversation. Mark-making and early writing skills are encouraged naturally through play. For example, to write the snack menu and create their own stories. Through play, real-life contexts and singing number rhymes, children are making very good progress in early numeracy and mathematics. Almost all older children are making significant progress in using number. They demonstrate confidence in counting and using number to solve problems. The stimulating and challenging outdoor environment is enabling children to take risks and develop their skills in climbing, balance and control. Children are developing an awareness of the natural world including seasonal change through the excellent use of the outdoor garden and local environment. The 'journey to the centre of our world' project encourages children and their parents to use their senses to explore local areas, including the park. Celebrating cultural diversity is very important to the setting. The annual international picnic brings families together through a shared interest in food. The setting has successfully achieved their fourth Eco-Schools Scotland Green Flag award. As a result, children are learning about how to care for their environment and how they can help others who are less fortunate than themselves. Recently parents and children raised funds to build a 'twin toilet' in India. The history of the setting is very important to staff, parents and children. The 'Rocking Horse Rally' in partnership with the local football team helped raise funds to restore the rocking horse which has been part of the setting since 1929.

How well does the early learning and childcare setting support children to develop and learn?

The setting supports children to develop and learn extremely well. The excellent range of high quality learning experiences including the abundance of natural materials and resources are encouraging children's limitless creativity. The headteacher and staff's knowledge of children as individuals and as learners enables staff to provide excellent support to your child. Ensuring your child feels safe, secure and included within the setting is really important to staff. Their high quality interactions and the way they skilfully adapt activities ensures all children are included at a level that is appropriate for them. For children who require a bit more help with their learning, staff work closely with parents and other partner agencies to ensure they are supported very effectively. The curriculum is child-centred and built upon a shared understanding of how children learn and the value of play. It is highly responsive to children's ideas and interests and at the same time provides depth and challenge through very well thought out planning. For example, curiosity about rocks found in the garden led to research on other types of rock and volcanoes. A trip to the museum helped to further extend children's knowledge. To enrich children's experiences, staff make use of parents, visitors and the local community such as the city farm. Parents are extremely positive about the work of the setting with it being described as 'a temple of learning and a training ground for future citizens'. Transition into the setting and on to primary school is very effective and provides children and families with very good support.

How well does the early learning and childcare setting improve the quality of its work?

There is a high level of commitment to continually improve the work of the setting. Self-evaluation activities involving staff, parents and children identify the setting's strengths and areas for improvement. This has led to many improvements such as the significant progress children have made in early numeracy and the ongoing improvements to the outdoor learning environment. From the earliest point of transition, the headteacher seeks the views of parents by asking 'what matters to you?' There is a strong focus on improving outcomes for children and their families. Monitoring of children's progress helps staff to provide the right level of support to children. As a result, children are making very good progress in their learning. The headteacher is inspirational and leads the setting very well. She is supported by the management relief teacher. Together, they provide very effective leadership to the staff team. The setting is a learning community for children and staff. The headteacher shares her knowledge to support the professional learning of staff. As a result, they have a deep understanding of how young children learn through play and how best to support their individual learning needs. The leadership and the skills of the staff team are having a very positive impact on the quality of your child's learning experience. We are confident the setting is in a strong position to continually improve.

During the previous Care Inspectorate inspection, the setting had no requirements and no recommendations. As a result of this inspection, there are no requirements and no recommendations.

Our inspection of your early learning and childcare setting found the following key strengths.

- Confident, enthusiastic children who are making very good progress in their learning.
- High quality children's experiences.
- Children's progress in early numeracy.
- Highly skilled staff team who are caring, nurturing and work extremely well together, alongside parents to meet children's learning needs.
- The strong and inspirational leadership of the headteacher and her commitment to securing the very best outcomes for children and families.

We discussed with staff and the education authority how they might continue to improve the early learning and childcare setting. This is what we agreed with them.

- Continue to develop the very good work of the setting.

What happens at the end of the inspection?

We are satisfied with the overall quality of provision. We are confident that the early learning and childcare setting's self-evaluation processes are leading to improvements. As a result, we will make no further evaluative visits in connection with this inspection. During the inspection, we identified aspects of innovative practice which we would like to explore further in order to share the practice with

others. These are the approaches used to support children's counting skills and the use of natural materials. As a result we will work with the early learning and childcare setting and local authority in order to record and share more widely the innovative practice.

Sandra Kehoe
HM Inspector

Anne McBroom
Care Inspector

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

If you would like to receive this report 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 email: 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 early learning and childcare settings, education authorities and inspectors to judge what is good and what needs to be improved in the work of the early learning and childcare setting. You can find these quality indicators in the publication *Child at the Centre(2)*¹. Following our inspection of each early learning and childcare setting, the Scottish Government gathers evaluations of three important quality indicators to keep track of how well all Scottish early learning and childcare settings are doing.

Here are the evaluations for **Tynecastle Nursery School**

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

We also evaluated the following aspects of the work of the early learning and childcare setting

The curriculum	very good
Improvement through self-evaluation	very good

Here are the Care Inspectorate's gradings for **Tynecastle Nursery School**

Quality of care and support	excellent
Quality of environment	excellent
Quality of staffing	excellent
Quality of management and leadership	excellent

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

http://www.careinspectorate.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=7644&Itemid=489

¹ *The Child at the Centre, Self-Evaluation in the early years*, HM Inspectorate of Education, 2007, http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/Images/TheChildattheCentreSelfevaluationintheEarlyYears_tcm4-684267.pdf