

Sub-Committee on Standards for Children and Families

2.00pm, Tuesday, 5 December 2017

Primary School Inspection revisit at Newcraighall Primary School

Item number

Report number

Executive/routine

Wards

Council Commitments

Executive Summary

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 and the Summary of Inspection Findings (Appendix 1) advises the Sub-committee on the outcomes of the re visit inspection.

Primary School Inspection revisit at Newcraighall Primary School

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 The Sub-Committee is requested to:
 - 1.1.1 Note the findings of the report including the areas where the education authority and the school should continue to improve the school; and
 - 1.1.2 Receive an authority inspection follow through report within two years of the publication of the inspection letter.

2. Background

- 2.1 A team of Inspectors from Education Scotland made a visit to the school in May 2016. This report details their main findings and the progress of the school and authority to make improvements in line with the recommendations.

3. Main report

Progress to date includes:

- 3.1 The QIEO has supported the Head Teacher to create an action plan to reflect the recommendations of the initial inspection.
 - 3.1.1 Regular observations of Learning and Teaching were supported by the QIEO
 - 3.1.2 Weekly progress summaries were produced by the Head Teacher and shared with the QIEO
 - 3.1.3 Opportunities for professional learning were shared with staff, who, consequently worked with schools where there was identified best practice.
 - 3.1.4 Ongoing support and challenge visits by the QIEO are planned to ensure continuity of progression of the action plan.

4. Measures of success

- 4.1 The commitment of staff to their continuing professional development and sharing of strengths effectively with one another.

- 4.1.1 The review of approaches to homework which is helping parents to be more engaged with their children's learning through interesting and varied activities.
- 4.1.2 The range of literacy skills children are developing and applying to other curriculum areas such as social studies.
- 4.1.3 Staff at the primary stages now planning more effectively for learning to ensure children make better progress.
- 4.1.4 In the nursery class, most children are confident and know their routine well.

5. Financial impact

- 5.1 There are no financial implications contained in the ES letter.

6. Risk, policy, compliance and governance impact

- 6.1 None.

7. Equalities impact

- 7.1 There are considered to be no infringements of the rights of the child.
- 7.2 Tracking of pupil performance by gender and Black Minority Ethnic (BME) is undertaken at school level and there are no adverse impacts.

8. Sustainability impact

- 8.1 None.

9. Consultation and engagement

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

10. Background reading/external references

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

Alistair Gaw

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11. Appendices

1. Outcomes of the re visit inspection Outcomes of the initial inspection

27 June 2017

Dear Parent/Carer

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

In May 2016, HM Inspectors published a letter on your child's school. The letter set out a number of areas for improvement which we agreed with the school and The City of Edinburgh Council. Recently, as you may know, we visited the school again. During our visit, we talked to children and parents and worked closely with the headteacher and staff. We heard from the headteacher and other staff about the steps the school has taken to improve. We looked at particular areas that had been identified in the original inspection. As a result, we were able to find out about the progress the school has made and how well this is supporting children's learning and achievements. This letter sets out what we found. The Care Inspectorate inspected the nursery class at the same time and that report will be available at www.careinspectorate.com.

How well are the school's approaches to self-evaluation leading to improvement and consistency in high quality learning and teaching across the school and nursery class?

The headteacher has successfully revised the school values through collaboration with parents, staff and children and is at a stage of readiness to share the school's refreshed vision. She has developed strong teamwork amongst staff and improved partnership working with parents and local partners. Staff now take an increased role in leading the school's improvement priorities. This has successfully improved the consistency in teaching approaches and the school's curriculum for literacy, health and wellbeing and numeracy. All staff are committed to their continuing professional development and share their strengths effectively with one another. This has been especially successful at the primary stages, in improving the use of digital technologies to support children's learning and to enhance teaching. Staff are more reflective about their own practices and in evaluating the effectiveness of the school's work. In most lessons observed during the visit, teachers are providing effective support and challenge for almost all children. Challenge for the highest attaining children is achieved through well-judged group activities in most classes. Children requiring support are making better progress through individual and group learning in class. They are supported well by staff who work alongside class teachers. In a few lessons, children are encouraged to think about their learning. We have asked staff to continue to raise expectations through consistent use of higher order questioning to engage all learners effectively in their learning. At the primary stages children are increasingly taking responsibilities for their learning and have a strong say in how to improve the school. Their contribution to, and

leadership of a variety of initiatives, is developing well. P7 children have successfully developed achievements in dance and lead a variety of clubs during lunchtime. P5 children initiated 'Play Pal' roles to the playground which has led to positive relationships amongst children across all stages. The headteacher encourages professional dialogue with staff and is developing an increased emphasis on self-evaluation. We have asked that all staff, and particularly the nursery, continue to evidence improvements and systematically evaluate progress to ensure they demonstrate an increasing impact on raising attainment. The headteacher needs to ensure the positive approaches to self-evaluation leading to improvements in the primary stages is equally strong in the nursery class.

How well are curriculum developments improving children's progress in learning?

The headteacher and staff have developed a clearer understanding of what they want children to achieve through Curriculum for Excellence. They have identified the features to include in the school's vision and values and are making relevant links to the school's local context. This is helping children feel more involved in the life of the school through having their ideas listened to and acted upon. The school recognises that they need to ensure the unique features of the school and its community are reflected in the rationale for the curriculum and that the vision and values should now be shared more widely with parents and partners. Parents value the regular newsletters that outline the ways children are involved in their learning. The review of approaches to homework is helping parents to be more engaged with their children's learning through interesting and varied activities. Within the nursery class, planning for children's learning is continuing to develop. Practitioners are becoming responsive to children's interests and ideas which is involving children more in their learning. A few children use floor books well to talk about their experiences and learning. At the primary stages, the ongoing development of curriculum planning, increased partnerships with parents and how children build on their skills over time is leading to better progress overall. This has been most noticeable in literacy and health and wellbeing. A strong feature is the range of literacy skills children are developing and applying to other curriculum areas such as social studies. Children across the school have increased their awareness of the importance of healthy lifestyles. We have asked staff to continue with the strong focus on numeracy and mathematics to ensure children make effective progress and have no gaps in their learning. Increased collaboration between nursery and P1 staff will help ensure that planning of skills development and learning experiences leads to better progress for nursery children. The school has strengthened its links with Castlebrae High School and its associated primary schools. This is supporting curriculum pathways and continuity in a range of curriculum areas.

How well is the school raising attainment and improving children's achievements?

Overall, staff at the primary stages are now planning more effectively for learning to ensure children make better progress. They are developing a shared understanding of what to expect children to achieve. We are pleased with the strong progress most children are making in literacy and English and their progress across the broad curriculum. Overall, the standard of children's attainment has improved. The

improved focus on professional dialogue and children's progress, together with approaches to identify children with additional support needs, helps form appropriate learning groups. Improved learning targets for children and feedback from staff is helping children to understand their next steps in learning and what they need to do to be successful. In the nursery class, most children are confident and know their routine well. They particularly enjoy being outdoors, exploring and investigating everyday objects as they play. Practitioners record achievements in literacy and numeracy. However, this needs to be done more consistently and approaches to assessing children's progress in the nursery class needs to improve. We have asked that nursery assessment information is gathered more effectively to ensure it accurately informs children's next steps in learning and demonstrates clearly the progress children are making. At the primary stages, the emphasis in developing children's skills in writing and its assessment has led to children achieving very well overall. Staff are growing in confidence and developing knowledge and understanding in making accurate professional judgements about children's progress and achievements. All staff should continue to develop approaches to analysing assessment information in order to track all children's progress effectively.

What happens next?

Overall, the inspection team is satisfied with the pace of change and the positive impacts evidenced through the professionalism of teachers, the improved curriculum and positive learning experiences for children. We are confident that the school has the capacity to continue to improve but more time is needed to evidence this more fully in the nursery class. The City of Edinburgh will continue to support the school and report progress to the Area Lead Officer in Education Scotland within 12 months of this inspection. This report will inform any decision made by Education Scotland on whether we will make a return visit. The City of Edinburgh Council will inform parents about the school's progress as part of its arrangements for reporting on the quality of its schools.

Susan Gow
HM Inspector

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 0131 244 4330, 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.