

Sub-Committee on Standards for Children & Families

2pm, Tuesday 30 October, 2018

Primary School Inspection at Hillwood Primary School

Item number	5.4
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 evaluations (Appendix 1) and the Summary of Inspection Findings (Appendix 2) advises the Sub-committee on the outcomes of the initial inspection.

Primary Inspection of Hillwood 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 Hillwood Primary School took part in a follow through inspection in August 2018. The follow through review was based on the initial published inspection report of 19.04.16.

Shortly after the inspection, the head teacher took up a secondment at another school and a new Head Teacher was seconded and, subsequently, permanently recruited to the post. As such, the Quality Improvement Education Officer (QIEO) supported the new HT to focus on the action plan in response to the inspection findings.

3. Main report

- 3.1 During the Inspection, the team found the following strengths in the school's work:-
- Confident and well-behaved children who show a commitment to their school.
 - The increasing involvement of parents and the community in the life of the school.
 - The quality of children's learning experiences at the upper stages.
 - The reflective leadership of the headteacher in identifying school improvements.
- 3.2 The following areas for improvement were identified and discussed with the headteacher and a representative from The City of Edinburgh Council:-
- Ensure tasks and activities meet the needs of all children consistently well.

- Continue to improve children's attainment in literacy and numeracy.
- Continue to develop the curriculum, including approaches to monitoring children's progress, giving a clearer focus to the nursery class and early stages.

3.3 Progress to Date:-

Evidence to reflect: 1. Ensuring tasks and activities meet the needs of all children consistently well.

The school focussed work on QI 5.3 Meeting the Learning Needs of all children. The Head Teacher has looked at universal and targeted support to meet the needs of children. The school has reviewed its vision, values and aims with children, staff and parents. Parent spoke positively about this experience and the culture and positive ethos across the school.

Evidence to reflect: 2. Continue to improve children's attainment in literacy and numeracy.

Hillwood primary school is a rural primary school that has 4 classes this session, of which 3 are composite classes. This session there are 5 new P1 children. These numbers often significantly impact on the percentage data of children who achieve a level at early, first and second level; i.e. under 10 children would not signify any numerical significance. If looking at the data alone, it appears inconsistent and lacking impact i.e. weak. However, the school has had success in relation to attendance of individuals where tracking by the HT has been positive for several individuals. Staff have considerable knowledge about the children in school but this now requires to be consistently and robustly tracked and monitored to evidence the impact of their efforts e.g. through SEAL and Heinemann Active Mathematics trackers.

Parents spoke favourably about the nursery use of online ejournals to communicate with parents about children's progress. The school should now consider how to further engage children in setting and reviewing personal learning targets and how these could be shared with parents.

Evidence to reflect: 3. Continue to develop the curriculum, including approaches to monitoring children's progress, giving a clearer focus to the nursery class and early stages.

The school has provided wider experiences to enable children to engage in developing employability experiences through links with the airport and local businesses and e.g. RSP engineers, Norton House etc. Commendably all classes are involved in the Community Cafe where they make/bake the refreshments for the local community. Staff should ensure that children are involved in all aspects of this enterprise and utilise the opportunity to develop understanding of relevant and current issues and skills across the curriculum.

The children spoke enthusiastically about their whole school trip to the theatre.

The school is looking outwards to develop their curriculum and should continue to do so across the cluster and beyond; possibly to similar settings to provide a sharing of similar opportunities and challenges. A curriculum plan should then be formulated for the cohorts across levels, taking account of the many changes in class configuration that may occur over their school journey.

- 3.4 In conclusion, Hillwood Primary School is a small “rural” school within the boundaries of the City of Edinburgh. Staff, pupils and parents have worked together and have continued to make some progress in each of the areas noted in the inspection. However, the impact of their work would be further supported by:
- Providing a robust and consistent tracking mechanism to reflect the impact of the school’s work in raising attainment in children’s progress.
 - Continue with your relentless focus on developing staff skills in learning and teaching by embedding learning from last session in both nursery and school.
 - Developing a quality improvement and self evaluation calendar/cycle for improvement which involves teachers in observing each other and learning from each other.
 - Producing a curriculum plan, N to P7 which reflects the unique context of Hillwood PS to ensure that all learners have opportunities to learn in school and in the wider community across time.
- 3.5 The QIEOs for the school and nursery will continue to work with the Head Teacher to support and challenge progress across the school. They will plan for improvement in the aspects noted above which will be reviewed in the next Standards and Quality report.

4. Measures of success

- 4.1 Inspectors gathered evidence to enable them to evaluate the school’s work using four quality indicators from How good is our school? (4th edition) and How good is our early learning and childcare? Quality indicators help schools, local authorities and inspectors to judge what is working well and what needs to be improved. Following the inspection of each school, the Scottish Government gathers details of these evaluations to keep track of how well Scottish schools are doing.
- 4.2 Descriptions of the evaluations are available from How good is our school? (4th edition).
- 4.3 The school also engages in ongoing self-evaluation activity to gather evidence to support their judgements about what is working well and what needs to be improved.

5. Financial impact

5.1 There are no financial implications contained in the ES report.

6. Risk, policy, compliance and governance impact

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

7. Equalities impact

7.1 None

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 <https://education.gov.scot/what-we-do/inspection-and-review/reports>

Alistair Gaw

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11. Appendices

- 11.1 Letter to Parents & Carers April 2016.
11.2 Hillwood Primary School, The City of Edinburgh, April 2016 - Summarised Inspection Findings.
11.3 Hillwood Primary School, City of Edinburgh, August 2018 Follow Through Inspection Report.

19 April 2016

Dear Parent/Carer

**Hillwood 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 children's awareness of themselves as learners, increasing involvement of parents and the community and aspects of literacy. 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?

Across the nursery and primary classes, children learn and achieve within a supportive and nurturing environment. In the nursery class, staff are consistently warm and caring and interact positively with children. As a result, most children are happy and settled in their play and cooperate well with each other. They are able to make choices in their play and most are developing some independence in tasks through, for example, helping to cut vegetables for snack. However, children are not yet developing, and applying, the skills they need in order to be fully independent learners. Children have some limited opportunities to discuss what they want to find out about their learning and are beginning to be involved in planning aspects of their own learning. We have discussed with staff the need to give children more opportunities to lead their own learning. Children's learning is enhanced by daily opportunities to be active. They are able to experience fresh air and exercise in a safe and challenging space outdoors. These opportunities promote healthy habits for life and a sense of wellbeing. Across the primary classes, almost all children enjoy their learning experiences. They are gaining in confidence in many positive ways including sharing the work of their action groups with peers at assemblies. Through these groups, children are developing skills for learning life and work, for example writing to local suppliers, coordinating the sale of Fairtrade items and developing international links with a school in Kenya. The quality of children's learning at the upper stages is of a particularly high quality with almost all children knowing themselves very well as learners and taking an active lead in their learning. The 'Hillwood Learning Powers' supports this very well. At the early stages there are several good examples of children discussing their learning. We have discussed with staff how this could be developed further by ensuring children are aware of what they have to do next to

improve their learning. We have asked staff to ensure that children's learning experiences are consistently strong across all classes building, particularly, on the good practice at the upper stages.

In the nursery class, children are making satisfactory progress in developing their literacy and early language skills and skills in mathematics and numeracy across learning. Most children listen well to instructions from staff, to their friends' ideas and to stories at gathering time. A few are beginning to explore and understand the roles of author and illustrator when they share a story with staff. The majority of children recognise familiar letters and a few can sound out familiar words such as their name. Most can recognise their name, for example, when 'signing' in. Overall, children's progress in literacy needs to be improved. Staff should continue to develop challenging and motivating real-life opportunities to apply and develop their skills in new and unfamiliar contexts. In mathematics and numeracy, most children show a keen interest in numbers appropriate to their stage of development. A few count to ten or beyond in their play and can count for a real purpose, for example, when preparing for snack. Through activities such as comparing the length of playdough sausages, children are developing an awareness of size and can use vocabulary such as longer and shorter. Across other areas of the curriculum, children are making satisfactory progress. They are developing their observation skills as they explore the properties of ice in the flower pots and water trays outside. Through celebration of events and festivals such as St Andrew's Day and Diwali children are developing an early awareness of their own and other cultures.

Across the primary classes, most children are making satisfactory progress, or better, in literacy and numeracy. Children listen well to each other and to adults in a range of class and group situations and most are able to answer questions confidently. By P7, children are able to express their views and opinions very well and form a reasoned argument. The majority of children are making a satisfactory start to their reading in the early stages. By P7, almost all children engage well with a wide range of texts. In writing, children's progress is variable. The majority of children in P1 to P3 are starting to write well for a range of purposes. Most older children are able to produce well-structured pieces of writing to express their feelings and support their project work. Across all classes, children would benefit from writing more often with staff agreeing on a common approach to how they mark children's work. Overall, in improving children's literacy, we have discussed with staff the need to increase children's awareness of print at the early stages making links to the nursery class. Overall, in mathematics and numeracy, most children are developing confidence in calculations appropriate to their stage of development. At the early stages, children are able to gather information through simple surveys and present this in a bar graph. Children are able to describe what volume is and how to estimate less, and more than a litre. Older children are developing confidence in using their numeracy skills in practical contexts. For example, in P4/5 they do this well through their finance project and, in P6/7, they apply their skills very confidently when preparing a budget for their 'Scottish Community Café'. By P7, almost all children are showing a strong awareness of fractions and percentages. Staff are aware that in order to improve children's attainment in numeracy, they should continue to develop children's mental agility. Children in the P4/5 class achieve success in learning about the world of work in working with a professional property centre exploring housing in the village and learning about how to produce professional schedules for their own homes. Children

are developing a sound knowledge about health and wellbeing through, for example, finding out about foods grown and produced in Scotland. Older children are developing understanding of the human body and demonstrate this by creating their own 'human body T shirts'. Children are developing a sense of empathy to others through participating in activities such as 'Race for Life' for Cancer Research.

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

There are important strengths in the way the school supports children to learn and develop. Staff provide a supportive and positive ethos that encourages children to be successful in their learning. In the nursery class, staff work hard to plan and devise activities which suit the stage of development and learning style of children. They need now to increase further, levels of challenge and depth in learning, particularly to support the development for older children. Tasks, activities and resources should build more on children's prior learning and support them in achieving next steps in their learning across all areas of the curriculum. In the primary classes, tasks and activities provided by staff are, overall, well judged and meet the needs of most children well. At the upper stages, this is achieved consistently well but in a few lessons in the early years staff should ensure that tasks and activities are at the right level of difficulty for children. We have discussed with the headteacher the need to ensure that all children are challenged more in their learning, building on best practise already in the school. Children who may need additional help with their learning have their needs identified very well, are included in classes and have positive relationships with their teachers. Staff work closely with other professionals and partners such as the Educational Psychologist and outreach services to ensure the individual needs of children are supported. Support staff work effectively across the school to help meet the needs of children. Parents give valuable, and increasing, support to the school with the Parent Council taking a strong lead. It is recognised that improved communication from the school, and events such as the 'Community Cafés' run by children, have helped this happen.

The headteacher has worked hard with staff to develop a clear, and understood, direction for the curriculum which the school provides for children. This is now more firmly focused on what is relevant for Hillwood Primary School and Nursery Class. The curriculum is continuing to develop, and improve, in line with national Curriculum for Excellence guidance. Success has been achieved in ensuring there is now a progressive approach to most areas of the curriculum. The school is making good use of the local community and partners to enhance the curriculum. For example, older children visited Pilton Retreat when learning about evacuation as part of their World War 2 project work. Productive links with Edinburgh Airport give children access to additional experiences. Staff are achieving success in developing outdoor learning, as an important part of the curriculum, and should continue with plans in this area. To give the curriculum a greater coherence, we have discussed with staff the need to work more closely across the nursery and early primary classes. Transitions into the nursery class, and into P1, are appropriately managed to ensure that children settle quickly and are secure in their environment. Children benefit from supportive transition activities as they move from P7 to Craigmount High School.

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

The headteacher has a clear vision for the school, provides strong leadership and is well respected in the school community. In her relatively short time in post, she has reflected on the school's strengths and what the school needs to do to improve. She has continued to embed an ethos where staff are willing to take on additional responsibility for improving areas of the school. There are a range of successful approaches in place to evaluate the work of the school. These are developing well and have the potential to be developed further. The views of parents are sought and clearly acted upon. Teaching staff share good practice and give each other feedback on visits to other classes. As the school moves forward, it should now build on these developing good practices to ensure consistency in teaching and learning and how the work of the nursery class is evaluated. Staff benefit from valuable support from improvement staff from the City of Edinburgh Council. With this continued support and the reflective leadership of the headteacher, we are confident that the school will continue to improve its work and secure positive outcomes for all children.

During the previous Care Inspectorate inspection, the school had no requirements and two recommendations. From these, all recommendations have been met. As a result of this inspection, there are no requirements and six recommendations.

This inspection found the following key strengths.

- Confident and well-behaved children who show a commitment to their school.
- The increasing involvement of parents and the community in the life of the school.
- The quality of children's learning experiences at the upper stages.
- The reflective leadership of the headteacher in identifying school improvements.

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.

- Ensure tasks and activities meet the needs of all children consistently well.
- Continue to improve children's attainment in literacy and numeracy.
- Continue to develop the curriculum, including approaches to monitoring children's progress, giving a clearer focus to the nursery class and early stages.

What happens at the end of the inspection?

We are satisfied with the overall quality of provision. We are confident that the school's self-evaluation processes are leading to improvements. As a result, we will make no further visits in connection with this inspection. As part of its arrangements for reporting to parents on the quality of education, the City of Edinburgh Council will inform parents about the school's progress.

Alan Urquhart
HM Inspector

Additional inspection evidence, such as details of the quality indicator evaluations and national care standards gradings, for your school can be found on the Education Scotland website at

<http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/inspectionandreview/reports/school/primsec/HillwoodPrimarySchoolEdinburghCity.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.

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Hillwood Primary School Follow Through Inspection Report

30.8.18

The follow through review was based on the initial published inspection report of 19.04.16. In the report the strengths of the school were identified as

- Confident and well-behaved children who show a commitment to their school.
- The increasing involvement of parents and the community in the life of the school.
- The quality of children's learning experiences at the upper stages.
- The reflective leadership of the headteacher in identifying school improvements.

Shortly after the inspection, the head teacher took up a secondment at another school and a new Head Teacher was seconded and, subsequently, permanently recruited to the post. As such, the Quality Improvement Education Officer (QIEO) supported the new HT to focus on the action plan in response to the inspection findings.

These findings required that the school:

1. Ensure tasks and activities meet the needs of all children consistently well.
2. Continue to improve children's attainment in literacy and numeracy.
3. Continue to develop the curriculum, including approaches to monitoring children's progress, giving a clearer focus to the nursery class and early stages.

Evidence to reflect: 1. Ensuring tasks and activities meet the needs of all children consistently well.

The school focussed work on QI 5.3 Meeting the Learning Needs of all children. The Head Teacher has looked at universal and targeted support to meet the needs of children. The school has reviewed its vision, values and aims with children, staff and parents. Parents spoke positively about this experience and the culture and positive ethos across the school.

In developing universal support, the school has engaged with cluster work to develop teachers' skills, knowledge and understanding of pedagogy, current research and to provide opportunities for staff to work with peers across a range of settings. There is evidence that the school and nursery have reflected on their pedagogical approaches in response to current thinking especially in the early years.

In nursery, there is a new team that are beginning to work well together and are well led by the new PT. There is a clear vision and welcoming ethos in the nursery, ably led by the new PT. The environment has been enhanced to include a more natural setting with free flow between outdoor and indoor play experiences. Continuous Provision is well considered with lots of natural open ended resources, indoors and out. There are a wide range of opportunities for children to engage in learning with support from adults. For children who attend for the day, meals are made available and the nursery are utilising space that is available in an adjacent hall. Staff are engaging with other professionals to address individual needs of children eg Speech and Language Therapist, Educational Psychology.

There is scope to review staffing organisation and learning opportunities during lunchtimes to enable children to fully benefit from this experience ie sitting at a table and talking together, reducing the amount of time that very young children are required to line up.

Nursery staff and EYQIEO should continue to work together to celebrate, develop and evaluate the range and quality of children`s experiences.

In school, the environment in P1/2 has been amended to encourage more play based learning. Staff have visited other schools to observe best practice as well as trialling opportunities for children. This is at the early stages of development but there is a commitment to this initiative from all staff involved. The school should continually evaluate the impact on learning during the implementation of this initiative to ensure that it meets the needs of this group of learners.

The Head Teacher has further developed teachers` capacity to provide tasks and activities which meet the needs of all children through termly reviews of planning. She now needs to track the impact of this planning on children`s progress in a way which is manageable for all staff to use and link this clearly to the planning cycle through planned termly quality assurance meetings.

Sharing classroom experiences have been implemented to quality assure the impact of staff development; there is scope to develop this and look at the impact on learners progress and track as previously noted.

ICT has been developed with staff through Ipad training, the purchase of apps and a digital cluster policy. Children are beginning to use this and staff are keen to develop the use of ICT with children after the impending refresh.

Evidence to reflect: 2. Continue to improve children`s attainment in literacy and numeracy.

Hillwood primary school is a rural primary school that has 4 classes this session, of which 3 are composite classes. This session there are 5 new P1 children. These numbers often significantly impact on the percentage data of children who achieve a level at early, first and second level; ie under 10 children would not signify any numerical significance. If looking at the data alone, it appears inconsistent and lacking impact ie weak. However, the school has had success in relation to attendance of individuals where tracking by the HT has been positive for several individuals. Staff have considerable knowledge about the children in school but this now requires to be consistently and robustly tracked and monitored to evidence the impact of their efforts eg through SEAL and Heinemann Active Mathematics trackers.

The staff have investigated and implemented a wide range of interventions to support children`s learning across the school including Word Boost, Read, Write Inc., Language Boost and Fresh Start. It would be helpful for the school to have a baseline in place in the nursery eg 27 month milestone to look at the level of language that the children are starting with in nursery and to then track the added value of their nursery and school interventions on their children`s progress. Practitioner Enquiry has been initiated in the nursery and plans are in place to develop this across the school. This will further support the wide range of interventions that are being embedded across the school and focus on the most appropriate interventions.

The school has invested heavily in time and resources on staff development last session in conjunction with cluster colleagues. They should now plan to embed these strategies over time to ensure consistency in learning for the children.

Parents spoke favourably about the nursery use of online ejournals to communicate with parents about children`s progress. The school should now consider how to further engage children in setting and reviewing personal learning targets and how these could be shared with parents.

Evidence to reflect: 3. Continue to develop the curriculum, including approaches to monitoring children`s progress, giving a clearer focus to the nursery class and early stages.

The school has provided wider experiences to enable children to engage in developing employability experiences through links with the airport and local businesses and eg RSP engineers, Norton House etc. Commendably all classes are involved in the Community Cafe where they make/bake the refreshments for the local community. Staff should ensure that children are involved in all aspects of this enterprise and utilise the opportunity to develop understanding of relevant and current issues and skills across the curriculum.

The children spoke enthusiastically about their whole school trip to the theatre.

The school is looking outwards to develop their curriculum and should continue to do so across the cluster and beyond; possibly to similar settings to provide a sharing of similar opportunities and challenges. A curriculum plan should then be formulated for the cohorts across levels, taking account of the many changes in class configuration that may occur over their school journey.

In conclusion, Hillwood Primary School is a small “rural” school within the boundaries of the City of Edinburgh. Staff, pupils and parents have worked together and have continued to make some progress in each of the areas noted in the inspection. However, the impact of their work would be further supported by:

- Providing a robust and consistent tracking mechanism to reflect the impact of the school`s work in raising attainment in children`s progress.
- Continue with your relentless focus on developing staff skills in learning and teaching by embedding learning from last session in both nursery and school.
- Developing a quality improvement and self evaluation calendar/cycle for improvement which involves teachers in observing each other and learning from each other.
- Producing a curriculum plan, N to P7 which reflects the unique context of Hillwood PS to ensure that all learners have opportunities to learn in school and in the wider community across time.

The QIEOs for the school and nursery will continue to work with the Head Teacher to support and challenge progress across the school. They will plan for improvement in the aspects noted above which will be reviewed in the next Standards and Quality report.