

Sub-Committee on Standards for Children & Families

2pm, Tuesday 30 October, 2018

Follow Through Report of St. Mary's Primary School

Item number	6.1
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. A copy of the letter issued to Parents and Carers can be found in Appendix 1, and a copy of the Follow Through Report is in Appendix 2.

Follow Through Report of St Mary's 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 St Mary's RC Primary School was inspected in December 2015 and the letter to parents was published in March 2016.
- 2.2 This was a pilot inspection where inspectors visited the school for two and a half days following a two day notification period. No grades were given for these pilot inspections.

3. Main report

- 3.1 The inspection team found the following strengths:
- Respectful, well-mannered children who enjoy learning and are proud of their school.
 - The warm and welcoming environment achieved through effective and positive relationships amongst children, staff and parents.
 - The teamwork of all staff, parents and partners to provide varied learning experiences and opportunities for children.
- 3.2 The following areas for improvement were also identified and discussed with the headteacher and Edinburgh City Council.
- Ensure a consistently high quality of learning and teaching across the school to raise attainment for all children.
 - Continue to develop and refresh the curriculum to ensure children make

appropriate progress in all areas, and to provide children with relevant and coherent learning experiences.

- Continue to build on the school's approaches to evaluating its own work to ensure this leads consistently to improvements in children's experiences and achievements.

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.
- 4.4 The Follow Through Report identified the following key strengths:
- In almost all lessons, children engage very well in their learning and interact positively when working in pair, group and class activities.
 - Across the school, children are enthusiastic and motivated to learn and are articulate and confident when discussing their learning.
 - One to one discussions and oral feedback with children about their learning is ensuring that almost all pupils know the steps they need to take to improve their learning and is helping them to become independent learners.
 - The introduction and distribution of Curriculum level overviews and termly newsletters focusing on the four contexts of learning is ensuring that pupils, staff and parents have an increased understanding of the progression within each curricular area.
 - St Mary's has worked creatively to ensure that that all pupils, staff and parents have a real say in evaluating the work of the school. This shared understanding by all stakeholders has led to improvements in children's experiences and achievements.
 - The learning community of St Mary's is clear about the impact of improvements arising from self evaluation and use the evidence to plan continuous improvement.
 - The very robust tracking system which is in place, together with the professional dialogue between the Senior Leaders and class teachers ensures that children make continuous improvements from their previous learning.

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

Executive Director of Communities and Families

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11. Appendices

- 11.1 Letter to Parents & Carers
11.2 St Mary's Primary School, City of Edinburgh, Follow Through Inspection Report.

1 March 2016

Dear Parent/carer

**St Mary's RC Primary School
The City of Edinburgh Council**

We are trying out some new approaches to inspection. You can find more information about why we are doing this, and details of our new approaches, at the link below¹.

St Mary's RC Primary School was inspected in December 2015. A team of inspectors visited your school for two and a half days, following a two-day notification period. During our visit, we talked to children and worked with the headteacher and staff. We looked at teaching, learning and assessment, and at how the school is working to raise the attainment of all children.

The inspection team found the following strengths:

- Respectful, well-mannered children who enjoy learning and are proud of their school.
- The warm and welcoming environment achieved through effective and positive relationships amongst children, staff and parents.
- The teamwork of all staff, parents and partners to provide varied learning experiences and opportunities for children.

The following areas for improvement were also identified and discussed with the headteacher and Edinburgh City Council.

- Ensure a consistently high quality of learning and teaching across the school to raise attainment for all children.
- Continue to develop and refresh the curriculum to ensure children make appropriate progress in all areas, and to provide children with relevant and coherent learning experiences.
- Continue to build on the school's approaches to evaluating its own work to ensure this leads consistently to improvements in children's experiences and achievements.

¹ <http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/inspectionandreview/about/principles/futureapproaches/index.asp>

What happens next?

We are confident that the school, supported by The City of Edinburgh Council and Education Scotland's Area Lead Officer, has the capacity to continue to improve and we will make no further visits in relation to 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.

Susan Duff
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.

(Appendix 2)

St Mary's RC Primary School Follow Through Report March 2018

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- Continue to build on the school's approaches to evaluating its own work to ensure this leads consistently to improvements in children's experiences and achievements.

Quality Improvement Education Officers from City of Edinburgh Council recently visited the school to report on the progress towards these next steps.

Ensure a consistently high quality of learning and teaching across the school to raise attainment for all children.

Relationships amongst staff, children, parents and the parish community are very strong. The inclusive school environment, which is based on mutual respect and trust, is impacting positively on children's learning.

In almost all lessons, children engage very well in their learning and interact positively when working in pair, group and class activities. Across the school, children are enthusiastic and motivated to learn and are articulate and confident when discussing their learning. One to one discussions and oral feedback with children about their learning is ensuring that almost all pupils know the steps they need to take to improve their learning and is helping them to become independent learners. Pupils set targets at the beginning of each term and complete reflections on these as well as discussing progress with their class teachers during learning discussions.

In all lessons, learning is well-planned and organised and in most lessons, learning experiences are well matched to meet the needs of all children.

Inclusion is a strong feature of the school. The support for learning teacher and pupil support staff are deployed very well to support children with their learning either in classes, in the support base (at children's request) or in the newly developed nurture room. A Diversity Fair organised by the pupils was a way for children to share their cultures and belief with the whole school community.

Approaches to tracking and monitoring are very effective in the school. Teacher judgement is supplemented by standardised assessments and daily classroom evaluations and observations. Staff work collaboratively and with cluster colleagues to moderate learning, teaching and assessment using the national benchmarks. The school is in the early stages of creating holistic assessments.

Teachers now plan collaboratively at class, stage and level to ensure progression in children's learning. The well established systems for monitoring and tracking, termly tracking discussions between class teachers and the senior management team provide opportunities to explore progress and attainment and to identify further support and challenge for individual learners.

Continue to develop and refresh the curriculum to ensure children make appropriate progress in all areas, and to provide children with relevant and coherent learning experiences.

The school has taken a collegiate approach to refreshing their curriculum rationale and design to take account of the unique location of St Mary's London Street. By inviting parents to attend workshops at the weekend and during the school day, the parents now have a shared understanding of all that happens in St Mary's and the rationale behind the initiatives and improvements.

The distribution of curriculum level overviews and termly newsletters focusing on the four contexts of learning is ensuring that pupils, staff and parents have an increased understanding of the progression within each curricular area.

The school has developed progression frameworks for Social Studies, Drama and Art and Design and now has progression frameworks across the whole curriculum. These progression frameworks are helping teachers plan and assess more effectively. They are also supporting staff and pupils to plan next steps in learning.

Analysis of school data highlighted that reading and maths should be areas of focus for school improvement. A whole school reading culture has been created by ensuring that the library is more accessible and extended opening has improved engagement and encouraged pupils who were previously reluctant to read. Parents report that 85% of their children are now more engaged with reading. Data shows an increase of 260% in boys borrowing books from the school library. New books are selected by pupils and the library focus group is pupil led.

All staff have undertaken a practitioner enquiry looking at pedagogy in maths. All staff analysed their own class data and identified gaps in pupil attainment. They then addressed these gaps by undertaking a practitioner enquiry focusing on Maths pedagogy. Pupils are able to discuss the impact of these developments on their learning and engagement and at the end of this session, staff will present and share their findings with colleagues. Parents visited each class for a 'Stay and Share' session that focused on Maths with subsequent 'Stay & Share' sessions focusing on Literacy and Health & Wellbeing.

Digital technology is now used consistently across the school.

Continue to build on the school's approach to evaluating its own work to ensure this leads consistently to improvements in children's experiences and achievements.

St Mary's has worked creatively to ensure that that all pupils, staff and parents have a real say in evaluating the work of the school. This shared understanding by all stakeholders has led to improvements in children's experiences and achievements.

The very robust tracking system, which is in place, together with the professional dialogue between the Senior Leaders and class teachers, ensures that children make continuous improvements from their previous learning. Pupils are involved in the planning of their assessments and are clear about their next steps in learning. The learning community of St Mary's is clear about the impact of improvements arising from self-evaluation and use the evidence to plan continuous improvement.

Pupil voice is strong across the school. The views of pupils, parents and carers are more regularly sought and acted upon. For example, pupils lead the master classes, ensuring the skills that will prepare the children for

positive destinations are clearly highlighted. Pupils have also planned improvements for the decking area in the main playground and have had their plans agreed for resources and activities for that area. Representatives from the various pupil groups and clubs present at school assemblies and at the Parent Council, informing of developments or initiatives being taken forward and the impact these initiatives are having on the life and work of the school.

The Pupil Council budgeted for and organised a multi cultural fair and led it across the school. Each class chose which country they were going to research and then the whole school put on a fair which included the culture, food, information and the language of each of the countries. As a result of this work, St Mary's received the School of Cooperation award. The school will continue the progress made on involvement of pupils by allowing the pupils to organise and risk assess their school outings related to classroom practice. The Young Ambassadors in Science are organising a whole school community Science Festival.

Parents were consulted about homework and as a result of the consultation process, homework is now more flexible in terms of time, challenge and activities. Parents were invited into school to cook with their children in partnership with the Cyrenians charity. Partnerships have also been established with John Lewis and our local Tesco store with chefs from John Lewis working with pupils during the cooking club. St Mary's continues to work closely with the community of St Mary's Cathedral where the Pope Francis Faith Award pupils lead tours around the cathedral and also lead the liturgy every 3rd Sunday. The school Gardening Group is a very successful partnership between parents and pupils. They work together to maintain the school garden and grounds with pupils developing their gardening skills as well as developing knowledge of different plants and herbs. Produce is sold to the school community and used in school. The school plans to further develop their partnerships and progression of skills across the school to ensure their pupils are engaging with the entitlements in 'Developing the young Workforce'.

Conclusion

With support from the education authority, St Mary's Primary School provided a very good standard of education for its young people. The school had made good progress since the inspection and had made the necessary improvements in light of the inspection findings. The education authority will not publish further reports in connection with the 2016 Education Scotland report.

Therese Laing
Quality Improvement Education Officer
March 2018

