

Sub-Committee on Standards for Children and Families

10:00am, Wednesday, 11th December 2019

Blackhall Primary School Follow Through

Item number
Executive/routine
Wards
Council Commitments

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 The Sub-Committee on Standards for Children and Families is asked to:
 - 1.1.1 note the findings of the follow through report including the areas where the education authority and the school should continue to improve the school.

Alistair Gaw

Executive Director Communities and Families

Contact: Jackie Reid, Quality Improvement Manager

E-mail: Jackie.reid2@edinburgh.gov.uk

Report

Blackhall Primary Follow Through

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 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.
- 2.2 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. City of Edinburgh Council visited Blackhall two years after the inspection to write a follow through report based on the progress and improvements made since the inspection.
- 2.3 Education Scotland letter and evaluations (Appendix 1) and the Summary of Inspection Findings (Appendix 2) advises the Sub-committee on the outcomes of the initial inspection.
- 2.4 CEC Follow Through (Appendix 3) advises the Sub-committee on the progress and improvements made since the inspection.

3. Background

- 3.1 In August 2019, a team of Quality Improvement Education Officers, representing the primary sector, visited Blackhall Primary School. During their visit they engaged with focus groups of staff and children and they worked closely with the Head Teacher, her senior management team and all staff to evidence the progress and improvements which the school had made.

4. Main report

- 4.1 The senior leadership team has worked hard to lead the development and improvement in areas highlighted in the inspection report.
- 4.2 The school recognises the need to further develop staff confidence in using the benchmarks across other curricular areas.

- 4.3 As planned, the school should continue to develop a clear rationale for the curriculum based on the unique context of the school.
- 4.4. A clear shared vision for the school has been developed in consultation with staff, pupils and parents. This reflects the aspiration of the whole school community to improve outcomes for learners across the four contexts for learning.
- 4.5 All staff have been consulted on the development of a new curriculum rationale which will be underpinned by the shared values of the school community. Staff clearly understand how the curriculum should be shaped by the uniqueness of the setting.
- 4.6 The school is continuing to develop the wider curriculum to ensure creative and innovative approaches to learning and teaching. Staff are aware of the importance of developing skills for learning, life and work. They have identified skills linking to literacy and numeracy and have plans to develop this across the wider curriculum.
- 4.7 Continue to develop approaches to assessing, monitoring and tracking of children's progress in order to improve pace and challenge in children's learning.
- 4.8 The school has worked hard to develop their approaches to planning, monitoring and assessing children's learning. The approach used has been collaborative, with staff across levels working together and sharing, through professional dialogue discussions around pedagogy and assessment approaches
- 4.9 Staff are confident about the progress their learners are making and plan in a targeted way to meet the specific needs of both individuals and groups of learners.
- 4.10 Staff are planning more effectively for challenge using open ended tasks. They have engaged with the benchmarks and use these to support both planning for assessment and to ensure where appropriate, children are being challenged within the next Curriculum for Excellence level. Children are encouraged to challenge themselves and apply their learning in different contexts.
- 4.11 Staff are engaging with attainment data and use this to inform their practice. They are aware of the attainment and achievement gap in their class.
- 4.12 All staff have engaged in practitioner enquiry focusing on pedagogy. This has enabled them to reflect on their practice and make improvements based on their research and professional dialogue.
- 4.13 The Quality Improvement Education team found that Blackhall Primary had made good progress in the two areas highlighted by Education Scotland in May 2017. The QIEO for the school will continue to work with the Head teacher to support and challenge progress across the school and this will continue to be reported to parents through the Standards and Quality report at the end of each session.

5. Next Steps

- 5.1 City of Edinburgh Education Officers will continue to support and challenge progress across the school.
- 5.2 The Head teacher will continue to be part of the Leadership Learning Partnership with groups of HTs across the City to ensure robust analysis of learning and teaching across the school.

6. Financial impact

- 6.1 There are no financial implications contained in the Follow Through report.

7. Stakeholder/Community Impact

- 7.1 CEC team engaged with focus groups of teaching staff, support staff and pupils during the follow through process.
- 7.2 There are considered to be no infringements on the right of the child.
- 7.3 Tracking of pupil performance by gender and Black Minority Ethnic (BME) is undertaken at school level and there are no adverse impacts.

8. Background reading/external references

- 8.1 N/A

9. Appendices

- 9.1 Appendix 1 Education Scotland letter
- 9.2 Appendix 2 Summary of Inspection Findings
- 9.3 Appendix 3 Follow Through Report on progress and improvements made since the inspection

22 August 2017

Dear Parent/Carer

In May 2017 a team of inspectors from Education Scotland visited Blackhall Primary School. During our visit, we talked to parents/carers and young people and worked closely with the headteacher and staff. We gathered evidence to evaluate the quality of leadership and management, learning provision and children's successes and achievements.

The inspection team found the following strengths in the school's work:

- Articulate, confident and happy children who thrive in the nurturing environment provided by staff. Children are enthusiastic, motivated and respond well to opportunities provided by the school.
- The effective leadership of the acting headteacher, together with the teamwork of the enthusiastic staff in securing school improvement and positive outcomes for children.
- The strong partnerships with parents, partners and the wider community to create an enriching learning environment for children.
- The inclusive approach in how the school promotes children's wellbeing, rights and resilience.
- Recently-introduced approaches to the development of literacy skills.

The following areas for improvement were identified and discussed with the headteacher and a representative from The City of Edinburgh Council:

- As planned, the school should continue to develop a clear rationale for the curriculum based on the unique context of the school.
- Continue to develop approaches to assessing, monitoring and tracking of children's progress in order to improve pace and challenge in children's learning.

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? 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 Education Scotland's evaluations for Blackhall Primary School

Leadership of Change	very good
Learning, teaching and assessment	good
Raising attainment and achievement	very good
Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion	very good

The letter and more detailed summarised inspection findings will be available on the Education Scotland website at; <https://education.gov.scot/inspection-reports/edinburgh-city/5521122>

What happens next?

We are confident that the school has the capacity to continue to improve and so we will make no more visits in connection with this inspection. The City of Edinburgh Council will inform parents/carers about the school's progress as part of its arrangements for reporting on the quality of its schools.

Alan Urquhart
HM Inspector

¹ How good is our school? (4th Edition) 2015 [How good is our school? \(fourth edition\)](#)

If you would like to receive this report in a different format, for example, in a translation please contact the administration team on the telephone number below and we will let you know what is available.

If you want to give us feedback or make a complaint about our work, please contact us by e-mail: complaints@educationscotland.gsi.gov.uk, or telephone us on the number below, or write to us addressing your letter to

**The Complaints Manager
Education Scotland**

Denholm House
Almondvale Business Park
Almondvale Way
Livingston EH54 6GA

T +44 (0)131 244 4330
E enquiries@educationscotland.gsi.gov.uk

www.educationscotland.gov.scot

© Crown Copyright, 2017

You may re-use this information (excluding images and logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence providing that it is reproduced accurately and not in a misleading context. The material must be acknowledged as Education Scotland copyright and the document title specified.

To view this licence, visit <http://nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence> or e-mail: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk

Where we have identified any third party copyright information you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.

Summarised inspection findings

Blackhall Primary School

The City of Edinburgh Council

SEED No: 5521122

08 September 2017

Attendance is generally above the national average 97.2%.

In February 2016 2.8% (Decile 9) per cent of pupils were registered for free school meals

In September 2015 2 per cent of pupils live in 20% most deprived datazones in Scotland

In September 2015 the school reported that 2.2 per cent of pupils had additional support needs

Key contextual information

Blackhall Primary School is a non-denominational school which serves the community of Blackhall in the northwest of Edinburgh. The school has a close working relationship with The Royal High School and the three other associated primary schools (Clermiston, Cramond and Davidsons Mains), the Blackhall partnership nursery and St Columba's Church.

At the time of the inspection the roll was 450, operating in 16 classes. The school roll has increased considerably in recent years.

The school currently has an acting headteacher who is one of the substantive deputy headteachers. The substantive Headteacher is currently on secondment, until May 2018.

1.3 Leadership of change

very good

This indicator focuses on collaborative leadership at all levels to develop a shared vision for change and improvement which is meaningful and relevant to the context of the school within its community. Planning for continuous improvement should be evidence-based and linked to effective self-evaluation. Senior leaders should ensure the need for change is well understood and that the pace of change is appropriate to ensure the desired positive impact for learners. The themes are:

- *Developing a shared vision, values and aims relevant to the school and its community*
- *Strategic planning for continuous improvement*
- *Implementing improvement and change*

- Since her appointment in August, the acting headteacher has demonstrated clear, strategic leadership and managed the pace of change well. She is a positive role model for staff and children and has been the driver of many aspects of school improvement, encouraging collective responsibility and ownership of agreed change. She has built on the successes made by the substantive headteacher. She has shown commitment to developing staff and teamwork. As a result, there is clear evidence of effective teamwork across the school.
- Senior leaders have empowered and encouraged staff to become involved in identifying the school's strengths and development needs and as a result staff are increasingly taking responsibility and ownership in leading aspects of school improvement. In particular, development work in literacy is of a high quality and in due course will lead to higher attainment. They should now build on this practice to fully embed a culture of distributive leadership throughout the school.
- There is a clear understanding of what the focus is for school improvement with continual evaluation of impact of the changes through the 'Rolling Log of Evidence'. The staff team have a good understanding of the context of Blackhall School and are engaged in addressing the relevant areas for development, for example, challenging the most able learners. All staff are committed to ensuring high standards for all the children in the school.
- Staff, parents and children have worked collaboratively to review and develop the school's vision, values and aims. Senior leaders and staff should now enable children to develop a greater understanding of how they can apply these to help them improve as learners and develop skills for life, learning and work.
- The school should take forward its plans to further develop its vision, values and aims embedding them into the core of the curriculum rationale.
- Priorities for improvement are identified using a range of evidence which includes attainment information, observation of learning and teaching, shared classroom experiences, cluster moderation, tracking and monitoring meetings, self-evaluation using the National Improvement Framework (NIF) and seeking the views of other stakeholders.
- Senior leaders and staff across the school should use information from

observation of learning and teaching and shared classroom experiences to further develop a shared understanding of good practice and areas for improvement related to learning, teaching and assessment. This could be further developed by a more outward looking approach to school improvement.

- All staff are involved in the process of change and in evaluating the impact of improvements. There is a clear plan in place setting out the school's priorities for improvement and to manage the pace of change. The 'Rolling Log of Evidence' is used well by staff to record collaborative approaches, evidence of progress and actions and impact of changes.
- Staff feel confident to suggest new ideas and feel that they can be creative and innovative and that they will be supported by senior leaders to take their ideas forward. There is an effective professional review and development (PRD) process within the school which is linked to the GTCS standards. Staff are encouraged and supported well to participate in career-long professional learning linked to career aspirations and professional update. This could be further enhanced by all staff becoming more involved in focused practitioner and collaborative enquiry.
- The school has achieved success in involving children in contributing to school improvement. For example, they are involved in a range of groups and committees across the school. The involvement of all children is ensured through the weekly 'Bingo Ball' consultation. Almost all children across the school feel that they have a say in making the school better.
- Senior leaders are establishing effective approaches to monitor the work of the school and track children's progress. For example, a full year 'Tracking and Monitoring' calendar is in place and the senior leaders meet termly with staff to review children's progress. There is however still scope to ensure these approaches are consistently rigorous to ensure effective and timely interventions to support all children's learning. Senior leaders could increase the frequency of tracking and monitoring meetings to ensure appropriate progress for all learners. The school should build on the positive approach being taken to monitoring with other schools within the cluster.

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

good

This indicator focuses on ensuring high-quality learning experiences for all children and young people. It highlights the importance of highly-skilled staff who work with children, young people and others to ensure learning is motivating and meaningful. Effective use of assessment by staff and learners ensures children and young people maximise their successes and achievements. The themes are:

- *Learning and engagement*
- *Quality of teaching*
- *Effective use of assessment*
- *Planning, tracking and monitoring*

- Overall, the quality of learning and teaching across the school is good with aspects of very good in many parts of the school. Across the school there is a very positive and engaging environment for learning. Relationships between staff and children are positive and nurturing. Overall, children's behaviour is exemplary.
- Through a range of engaging, active learning opportunities across the curriculum, children frequently work collaboratively in pairs and small groups. They are fully involved in what they are asked to do, highly motivated and enjoy their learning. For example, P7 use published bus timetable to plan bus routes and at P5 children use the local estate agent to reflect on the use of persuasive language. In P4 children work well together to record personal bests in athletics. There is scope to build on this good practice and ensure a greater consistency in approaches to how children lead their own learning. Recent approaches to providing greater challenge, for example, 'mild, spicy, hot challenges' could be applied more consistently across the school within an increased shared staff understanding of how this approach adds best value to children's learning.
- Children are keen to share what they have learned with one another and they are confident when talking about their tasks and activities. As a result of these regular opportunities to talk about their learning, children are becoming more confident in discussing what they have done well and what they need to improve. This is enhanced further through, for example, weekly learning conversations and target setting. Whilst children are involved in using learning journeys there is scope to develop a greater consistency across all classes in how they are used. This could build on what children bring from associated nurseries and ensure a greater consistency in approaches across the early level.
- In a few lessons, staff need to plan more effectively and provide an appropriate level of challenge for individuals and groups within the class to ensure that the learning activities are well-matched to the needs of all learners.
- Pupil voice has been strengthened with the introduction of the 'Bingo Ball' initiative which ensures every child has a say in shaping improvements in the school. Learning through outdoor activities, including work with Earth Calling, STEM lessons and organising ECO, Christmas and Curriculum Fairs is providing children with a range of contexts to develop and consolidate knowledge and learn new skills. Staff should ensure learning through play is both purposeful and

challenging. Staff are identifying appropriate opportunities to use the Wonder Woods to support learning objectives in health and wellbeing. Children are now identifying and reflecting on the skills for learning, work and life with visits from parents helping them make connections to future careers.

- Classes make a weekly visit to the Information Technology (IT) suite and new digital technology has recently been introduced. However there is scope to improve the use of digital technologies to enhance learning further across all stages of the school.
- In almost all classes, there is evidence of a variety of teaching approaches including active learning, whole class lessons, group and paired work, independent learning and the use of games. Most of the learning environments are stimulating and display a good variety of children's work across the curriculum which supports children in their learning. Good practice should now be shared to ensure consistency across the school.
- Overall staff provide clear explanations during their teaching. In almost all lessons observed, teachers shared learning intentions and as a result children are clear on the purpose of their learning. In the best lessons, these learning intentions lead on to useful plenary sessions. There is scope to involve children more in generating 'Steps To Success' and ensuring these are more closely matched to the intended learning within lessons.
- Most teachers use questioning to good effect to check understanding and build on prior learning. In the best observed lessons, staff use well considered questions to scaffold and extend learning. Staff across the school should now share the good practice observed at the upper stages to ensure higher order questioning is developed more consistently.
- In most classes, children are provided with a range of oral and written feedback. In a few classes, children receive high-quality written feedback to identify their achievements and their next steps in learning. All staff should further develop their skills in providing more evaluative feedback to help pupils understand how they are progressing and what they need to do to improve.
- Across all stages in the school, staff use assessment for learning strategies well which helps children understand what they are trying to learn and what is expected of them. Recent work in the development of the school's initiative in creating a 'Learner's Toolkit' is providing clearer guidance across the school. This should now be tailored to suit the needs of individual classes. In the best lessons observed, approaches such as self and peer assessment are enabling children to reflect on, and evaluate, their own learning. Staff use the information gathered to monitor how well children understand their learning. There now needs to be a clearer focus on using assessment from day to day learning and teaching to plan well-timed interventions and next steps for individuals and groups to support or extend learning.
- A range of standardised assessments and on-going teacher professional judgement are used to inform attainment. Teachers should now, as planned,

engage more fully with Curriculum for Excellence benchmarks. Staff should use the benchmarks to improve and extend monitoring across all areas of the curriculum. The school should now take forward its plans to develop staff confidence in analysing and interpreting all data and help inform professional judgements and predictions about national levels of attainment.

- Staff are gaining in confidence when making professional judgements about the achievement of a level within Curriculum for Excellence for literacy and numeracy and should now use tracking meetings to increase their capacity to predict when children should be achieving a level.
- While staff engage in visits to each other's classrooms to share experience and moderate learning, they should now engage in moderation activities within and beyond the school. This should be extended to other curricular areas beyond literacy and numeracy. Staff have made a positive start with this in moderating with other schools within the local cluster.
- Staff plan collaboratively to ensure lessons are engaging and effectively resourced. Planning has been reviewed to ensure workload is proportionate and tackles bureaucracy. Planning and tracking meetings provide an opportunity for class teachers and the leadership team to discuss strategies, interventions and next steps for all pupils particularly those requiring challenge or support. Staff are sufficiently aware of which children face challenges and provide additional support. Pupil support assistants are timetabled very effectively providing a balance of direct support to individual pupils and wider support for learning.

2.2 Curriculum: theme 2: Learning Pathways

- Across the school, children receive a broad and balanced curriculum which gives children access to their entitlements within Curriculum for Excellence. The school is correctly revisiting its rationale for the curriculum to ensure all staff have a clearer shared understanding of what the school is trying to achieve across all contexts of learning. In doing so, the school should build further on the unique features of the Blackhall context and how this influences curriculum developments. The principles of curriculum design are evident in the work of individual classes and this work will ensure a greater cohesion in approaches to the curriculum across the school. The curriculum builds successfully in working with partners in the local community and beyond. These partnerships support the curricular activities very well.
- Children benefit from clear progressive pathways in literacy, numeracy, health and wellbeing based on the experiences and outcomes of Curriculum for Excellence. Progressive programmes, based on guidance from The City of Edinburgh Council provide suitable learning experiences across almost all other curricular areas in individual classes. Re-visiting the rationale for the curriculum will help staff develop a shared understanding about a greater continuity in approaches to skills progressions in all areas of the curriculum.
- Learning for sustainability and outdoor learning are developing well across the curriculum with children, developing a strong understanding of their environment including, for example children learning in a local forest and in the Wonder Woods.
- The school should continue to refine its curriculum allowing children to make more meaningful connections across their learning and across different curriculum areas. The continued focus on developing skills for learning, life and work and creativity will help this happen. There is scope for staff in the early years, and through soft start times at other stages, to develop further the purpose of play in meaningful contexts. Children would benefit from play that both consolidates and extends their learning of skills, knowledge and understanding across the curriculum.
- Alongside the development of the revised rationale for the curriculum, staff should consider how time is fully used on a day to day and week to week basis.
- Children benefit from a wide range of out-of-class activities such as cross-country and other sporting and musical activities.

2.1: Safeguarding

- The school submitted self-evaluation information related to child protection and safeguarding. Inspectors discussed this information with relevant staff and where appropriate, children. In addition, inspectors examined a sample of safeguarding documentation. Areas for development have been agreed with the school and the education authority

3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion

very good

This indicator focuses on the impact of the school's approach to wellbeing which underpins children and young people's ability to achieve success. It highlights the need for policies and practices to be well grounded in current legislation and a shared understanding of the value of every individual. A clear focus on ensuring wellbeing entitlements and protected characteristics supports all learners to maximise their successes and achievements. The themes are:

- *Wellbeing*
- *Fulfilment of statutory duties*
- *Inclusion and equality*

- The school's values and vision statement includes a focus on promoting wellbeing, fairness and respect for others with a strong commitment to children's rights. Strong positive relationships are evident between staff, children, parents and partner agencies. Individuals are valued, encouraged and respected. This creates a culture where children are supported to achieve and they know who to turn to if they need support. Staff understand their role in relation to wellbeing and the impact on learning for children and their families.
- Almost all children say that they feel safe and cared for in school. They identify who they would talk to if they had concerns. Staff are committed to ensuring improvements in wellbeing for children. Their work, a number of years ago, on developing planners for health and wellbeing was recognised by the education authority and adopted across schools in The City of Edinburgh Council. Teachers make very good use of the wellbeing indicators to plan teaching and learning to help children develop a clear understanding of their own wellbeing. Children understand the risks associated with social media and the importance of exercise and healthy eating. They are able to talk confidently and knowledgeably about what the wellbeing indicators mean in relation to their own wellbeing. For example, they can talk about when they feel safe, included and achieving. Children have a good understanding of resilience and the strategies they can use to developing their own resilience.
- Staff have developed innovative approaches like 'I can make a difference', 'Blackhall buzz' and 'Bingo Ball' to help them listen to and taking account of pupils' views. As a result, children have very good opportunities to be active participants in the life of the school. In addition, the class wellbeing representatives take good responsibility for ensuring that pupils' voices are a meaningful part of developments in the school, including the recent development of the school grounds.
- The school has very good procedures in place for supporting children's learning. Staff are committed to improving outcomes for children and supporting their learning. They know children well and have a good understanding of their strengths, family circumstances and support needs. They identify individual children's needs appropriately and put support in place to meet these needs. The staged intervention approach is used very well to consider the needs of children and identify appropriate interventions and support.

- The support for learning team works in close partnership with classroom teachers to identify and provide a range of additional support for children and staff. This includes regular consultation about planning to meet children's needs, assessment of needs, and the provision of additional resources and training. Children receive additional support in their own class from pupil support assistants (PSAs) and the support for learning teacher. In addition, a small number of children receive direct support for their learning individually and in groups outwith their classroom. Staff should continue to monitor the time given to this form of direct support to ensure that this does not become the prime means of helping children to learn. PSAs support children very well in class, and through a range of specific skills programmes. They have benefitted from a range training to help them support children.
- Children benefit from the school's inclusive environment where they have equal opportunities to learn and participate in wider activities. The school's work towards developing children's rights is resulting in a very good understanding of equality and diversity. The school continues to develop strategies, including a plan for the Pupil Equity Fund, to ensure that there are improvements to attainment and achievement for children and families facing a range of challenges. A range of partners is well engaged in supporting the school's strategies for these children and families.
- The school and partner agencies follow local and national guidance in terms of implementing GIRFEC requirements to identify, plan and review children's needs. A small number of children with additional support needs have an individual education plan (IEP) which is reviewed regularly. Pastoral transitions are well planned and there is enhanced transition for children with additional support needs. A wide range of partners support this work to very good effect.
- The school has very good understanding of its statutory duties. All children have two hours of physical activity each week and the school provides appropriately for religious observance.

3.2 Raising attainment and achievement

very good

This indicator focuses on the school's success in achieving the best possible outcomes for all learners. Success is measured in attainment across all areas of the curriculum and through the school's ability to demonstrate learners' achievements in relation to skills and attributes. Continuous improvement or sustained high standards over time is a key feature of this indicator. The themes are:

- *Attainment in literacy and numeracy*
- *Attainment over time*
- *Overall quality of learners' achievement*
- *Equity for all learners*

Attainment in Literacy and Numeracy:

- Overall, children's attainment, including those with additional support needs, in English language and literacy and in mathematics and numeracy is very good. Classroom observations, with children and staff during the course of inspection supported this evidence well. In response to data scrutiny on performance over time, progressive and consistent programmes have been developed for literacy and numeracy and as a result, attainment is rising. Tracking of children's progress has been reviewed to focus on increased expectations of pace and challenge in literacy and numeracy. Where there is a risk of attainment slipping, staff take appropriate and prompt action. However, the school now needs to apply more rigour to this process.

Overall progress in Literacy:

- Overall children's progress in literacy is very good.
- In listening and talking most children achieve the early level by the end P1. By the end of P4 most achieve the first level and by the end of P7 most achieve the second level. In reading, most children achieve the early level by the end of P1, most achieve the first level by the end of P4 and most achieve the second level by the end of P7. In writing most children achieve early level by the end of P1, most achieve the first level by the end of P4 and most achieve the second level by the end P7. The school now needs to ensure it provides more challenging learning for children who exceed the expected.

Listening and Talking:

- Overall, children are developing and applying skills in listening and talking across their learning very well.
- Almost all children are articulate, speak confidently and with enthusiasm. All children listen attentively to their teachers instructions. They are respectful when listening to presentations by their peers and offer helpful feedback. At the second level, children are able to differentiate well between opinion and fact and can create an informed view based on available information.
- Children across the school are developing their skills in interacting with others through e.g., class presentations and co-operative group work. They do this very well.
- At the early level, most children can respond to instructions and ask questions which demonstrate understanding related to their learning. By the first level, most children are demonstrating that they can ask and respond to questioning and can identify key ideas well within spoken texts including digital and audio visual texts.

At the second level, the development of higher order thinking skills in P7 is an example of very good practice.

Reading:

- Across the school, a very high standard of reading is evident in all classes. Staff provide a variety of opportunities to analyse texts, study characterization and extend vocabulary work and comprehension.
- Children working at the early level are developing their phonic skills very well following a structured programme. They can sound out and blend words, apply skills and use fun games to practice their letters words and phrases. However, a few children in P1 who show confidence in diagraphs and blends would benefit from further challenge.
- Children working at the first level enjoy reading aloud and can talk confidently about books they are reading. Across the school, children participate in useful paired and individual reading activities. When reading aloud almost all children do so clearly and with expression beyond their age. In P4, children are very confident in explaining preference of authors and can confidently contribute to discussions about characters and ideas related to the text.
- By the second level children's enjoyment of reading is evident. Almost all children are able to use their knowledge of language to read unfamiliar texts for pleasure. For example, children in P7 are reading Anthony Horowitz texts.
- Across all levels, the approach to skills development in reading is a key strength of the school and, as a result, children are able to talk confidently about their own skills. Almost all children engage well with a range of texts across learning and are selecting texts for their personal reading using different strategies and for different purposes. Almost all children are able to identify key information from texts for a range of different purposes.

Writing:

- Writing across the school is of a very high standard and children are making very good progress. Development work this session on criteria for assessment is having a positive impact on progress which is tracked systematically. Guidance is given to staff on the skills to be developed and overtaken. Staff now need to develop their moderation practices further to ensure that all tracking information gathered is robust. There are examples of very effective feedback offered in the upper school; however, a consistent approach to giving feedback is needed across every class to improve children's progress in writing further.
- Expectations around presentation of writing are consistently high.
- The teaching of spelling is structured giving opportunities to use and apply knowledge of phonics and spelling strategies in a range of contexts. Children respond well to this and are making good progress with their spelling
- At the early level, children are able to use a range of technical skills, including using capital letters and full stops. They are confident in forming letters and use sounds to form simple sounds and letters very well. Children are able to write at length and for a variety of different purposes.
- At the first level, most children are capable of writing pieces which are imaginative, informative, describe a set of instructions or contain a persuasive argument. Almost all are using appropriate vocabulary for specific purposes when creating their own texts across a range of genres. Children are applying skills effectively through independent pieces of writing and work through the process of writing including planning, drafting and editing.
- Almost all children working at the second level use appropriate vocabulary to

convey thoughts and feelings when developing characters and settings. There is evidence of very strong pieces of independent writing where children are writing at length across a range of genres and styles. They incorporate writing techniques such as personification very well to enhance their writing. Staff should now consider the pace of learning and level of challenge for those children who are progressing confidently through their targets.

- At all stages, children have a good understanding of the tools they need for writing, for example, they know about appropriate punctuation, spelling and have a sound knowledge of parts of speech.

Attainment in numeracy and mathematics

- Attainment in numeracy and maths is very good.
- According to the school, almost all children achieve the early level by the end of P1, the first level by the end of P4 and most children achieve the second level by the end of P7. The school has correctly identified scope for a number of children to attain these levels earlier. Staff have introduced an approach to flexible grouping in most classes, however the school now needs to develop progressive levels of challenge in tasks related to development of skills. This will ensure all children learn at an appropriate pace and that expectations of what children can achieve remain high. Together with the consistent focus on the development of mental agility through the existing SEAL programme, children's understanding of number and number processes will continue to be developed. Children in most classes are given opportunities to revisit taught concepts and deepen their learning.

Number, Money and Measurement

- Across the school, almost all children show strength in understanding number processes, developing an increasingly sound understanding of the number system and place value as they progress through the school. By the end of the early level, almost all children are able to count with confidence, work on simple addition and subtraction and are confident in counting forwards and backwards within 100. By the end of first level, almost all children are confident in multiplying by 2,3, 5, 10 and display a good understanding of place value. By the end of second level, most children are demonstrating their knowledge of fractions, decimal fractions and percentages and use these skills in real-life scenarios. Children across the school are confident in explaining the strategies they are using for mental calculation as appropriate to their stage.
- As they progress through the school, children are becoming increasingly more confident in identifying and using coins and notes. Across all levels there are a number of opportunities provided to develop skills in this area and apply to activities linked to the life of the school.
- As children move through the school, most are confident and accurate in measuring and estimating using a range of standard units. They are able to select the relevant instruments and units to measure length, weight and capacity. At the second level most children can calculate perimeter, surface area and volume using real-life contexts.

Shape, position and movement:

- Almost all children at the early level are able to identify 2D shapes. At the first level almost all children confidently named 2D shapes and 3D objects and are able to discuss properties such as face, edge, angles. At second level most children are confident when measuring angles.

Information handling:

- Across the school most children are gathering and presenting data in a range of forms appropriate to their ability and linked to the learning context which also provides opportunities for collaborative approaches. This allows children to demonstrate their understanding and explain their thinking to others.
- Children in the upper stages could demonstrate problem solving skills and strategies within real life contexts involving local bus timetables and the planning of a school excursion.

Attainment over time:

- Over the last three years, whilst trends in attainment have been variable, data for the early and first levels in June 2016 indicates a significant rise in attainment in literacy and numeracy. At the second level attainment in literacy and numeracy has improved. Recent strategies combined with improved approaches to teaching have shown positive impact on children's levels of attainment. Inspection evidence suggests that many children may be performing above the attainment figures provided by the school.
- The school needs to ensure that its strategy to raise attainment supports more consistent progress through Curriculum for Excellence levels across the curriculum.

Broad General Education

- At all stages, children are achieving well across the broad general education. Examples include –
- Children are developing a very good understanding of sustainability and how to look after the outdoor environment. They are developing very good skills through learning in a local forest and in the Wonder Woods within the school environment.
- In all classes, children are attaining very well in physical education and rise to the high standards set by staff.
- Children skills in science are developing well. They are able to talk knowledgeably about their work on STEM and their whole-school visit to the Glasgow Science Centre.
- At most stages, children are developing good skills in the expressive arts, for example, how they can use drama to express their emotions. Across the school, there are many examples of good-quality art work in a variety of styles and genres. Children are able to use the work of famous artists as a stimulus for their own work.
- The school is aware that in order to improve further all children's skills across all subjects there is need to improve consistency in approach from stage to stage. Staff should build on the best practise already in the school to ensure that all subjects have clear progressive pathways which allow children to build on their prior learning. This should be achieved within the school's work on revisiting its rationale for the curriculum.

Equity for all Learners:

- Children at risk of missing out are supported very well, e.g. the school athletics club ensures that all children have the opportunity and are encouraged to participate. The school has produced a comprehensive plan for the Pupil Equity Fund closely linked to the School Improvement Plan to meet the needs of vulnerable children or those who may be disadvantaged in their learning. The tracking and monitoring system ensures that any barriers to children's learning and achievement are identified and rigorous interventions put in place. There is now a need to develop this approach to ensure the needs of more able children are always met.

Overall quality of learners' achievements

- Throughout the school children experience a wide range of opportunities to help them develop confidence and self-esteem and this enables them to develop their personal interests further.
- Children's achievements are recognised and celebrated in newsletters, on the school website, through 'Blackhall Buzz' and at weekly 'Star of The week' assemblies. Children are taking ownership of their own learning through the use of learning logs which also record their achievements in and out of school.
- Children across the school are gaining important leadership skills and gaining confidence in sport through being involved in Edinburgh City Sports Programme. Children benefit from participation in a range of after school clubs which include athletics, cross country, football, drama, dance and knitting.
- Children are developing skills for life such as citizenship and leadership and enthusiastically take on responsibilities such as BFG buddies, house captains, class helpers, book club etc. These skills are further developed through the school's participation in Rights Respecting Schools and Eco Schools (going for 5th Flag). Children in P6 and P7 gaining further confidence in the citizenship and leadership skills and attributes that are being developed through the school's participation in the Jass Programme.
- Primary 7 children benefit from a week of residential experience at Dalguise Outdoor Centre.

School choice of QI Partnerships

- **Theme 1-The development and promotion of partnerships**
- **Theme 2 - Collaborative learning and improvement**
- **Theme 3 - Impact on learners**

Suggested word count (dependent of number of themes)

- The school has very successfully established a wide range of partnerships throughout the local community. These positive partnerships have enhanced outcomes for children. For example, the collaborative work with Earth Calling has developed children's understanding of sustainability and children have benefitted from the impressive and imaginative renovation of the school grounds and the 'Wonder Woods'. There are close working relationship with schools in the learning cluster, Blackhall partnership nursery and a number of local special schools which ensure that children experience positive transitions through their learning journey.
- The school works very well with parents and partners in the local community to support children's learning. Regular newsletters and updates on the website are produced by the school. Workshop sessions on the curriculum give parents the added knowledge to better support their children at home. An example of this is the recent curriculum workshop which older children helped organise.
- The Parent Council and Parent Staff Association play a very active part in the life of the school and support the school through providing extra funding, and supporting and organising events such as the autumn and Christmas Fair and the recent Eco-Fair. The provision of funds for sports equipment and to help develop an outdoor classroom in the form of the Wonder Woods are examples of where parents have given extremely effective support to the school.
- The Parent Council has responded very well to the local authority's approaches to closing the poverty gap across the city. Members of the Parent Council have undertaken training on the authority's strategies to close the poverty gap and now intend to work closely with the school to develop a Blackhall approach which could help families who may be facing financial difficulties.
- The varied partnerships are based on shared values, mutual respect, strong relationships and sharing of expertise to improve outcomes for children. As partners come from differing backgrounds and have a range of reasons for being involved with the school, there are few obvious opportunities for regular meetings or collaboration between the partners. The further growth and promotion of partnerships could be enhanced by evaluating the impact of partnerships on learners and developing a more strategic overview.

Particular strengths of the school

- Articulate, confident and happy children who thrive in the nurturing environment provided by staff. Children are enthusiastic, motivated and respond well to opportunities provided by the school.
- The effective leadership of the acting headteacher, together with the teamwork of the enthusiastic staff in securing school improvement and positive outcomes for children.
- The strong partnerships with parents, partners and the wider community to create an enriching learning environment for children.
- The inclusive approach in how the school promotes children's wellbeing, rights and resilience.
- Recently-introduced approaches to the development of literacy skills.

The following areas for improvement were identified and discussed with the headteacher and a representative from The City of Edinburgh Council:

- As planned, the school should continue to develop a clear rationale for the curriculum based on the unique context of the school.
- Continue to develop approaches to assessing, monitoring and tracking of children's progress in order to improve pace and challenge in children's learning.

What happens at the end of the inspection?

We are confident that the school has the capacity to continue to improve and so we will make no more visits in connection with this inspection. The City of Edinburgh Council will inform parents/carers about the school's progress as part of its arrangements for reporting on the quality of its schools.

Education Scotland

Denholm House
Almondvale Business Park
Almondvale Way
Livingston EH54 6GA

T +44 (0)131 244 4330
E enquiries@educationscotland.gov.uk

www.education.gov.scot

© Crown Copyright, 2017

You may re-use this information (excluding images and logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence providing that it is reproduced accurately and not in a misleading context. The material must be acknowledged as Education Scotland copyright and the document title specified.

To view this licence, visit <http://nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence> or e-mail: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk

Where we have identified any third party copyright information you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.

Appendix 3

Blackhall Primary School Follow Through Report August 2019

In September 2017, Education Scotland published a letter following the inspection visit to Blackhall Primary School. The letter set out two areas for improvement which were agreed with the school and City of Edinburgh Council. Recently, an Education Authority Team visited the school to assess the extent to which the school was continuing to develop the quality of its education including the areas identified for improvement.

This report tells you about the quality of education provided by the school since the inspection. It also comments on the progress made in the agreed areas for improvement.

During the follow through we talked to children and worked closely with the headteacher and staff. 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 follow through sets out what we found.

As planned, the school should continue to develop a clear rationale for the curriculum based on the unique context of the school.

A clear shared vision for the school has been developed in consultation with staff, pupils and parents. This reflects the aspiration of the whole school community to improve outcomes for learners across the four contexts for learning. The staff have a clear understanding of the social, economic and cultural context of the local community and have used this knowledge to shape the vision for the school. Staff are beginning to embed this vision into the life of the school and plan to link this work with their new Positive Relationships Policy.

All staff have been consulted on the development of a new curriculum rationale which will be underpinned by the shared values of the school community. Staff clearly understand how the curriculum should be shaped by the uniqueness of the setting.

The school is continuing to develop the wider curriculum to ensure creative and innovative approaches to learning and teaching. Science is now being taught discreetly with clear progression pathways and links made with the secondary school. This has given children more engaging, relevant and motivating experiences. Staff are aware of the importance of developing skills for learning, life and work. They have identified skills linking to literacy and numeracy and have plans to develop this across the wider curriculum.

Continue to develop approaches to assessing, monitoring and tracking of children's progress in order to improve pace and challenge in children's learning.

The school has worked hard to develop their approaches to planning, monitoring and assessing children's learning. The approach used has been collaborative, with staff

across levels working together and sharing, through professional dialogue discussions around pedagogy and assessment approaches. Staff are confident about the progress their learners are making and plan in a targeted way to meet the specific needs of both individuals and groups of learners.

The Blackhall Assessment Framework will continue to support a greater understanding of assessments required to be undertaken throughout the school year. This has provided more robust data to help inform teacher professional judgement. As a result, staff report that they are more confident in making these judgements about children's progress and in addition, the pace of learning has improved.

Staff are planning more effectively for challenge using open ended tasks. They have engaged with the benchmarks and use these to support both planning for assessment and to ensure where appropriate, children are being challenged within the next Curriculum for Excellence level. Children are encouraged to challenge themselves and apply their learning in different contexts.

Staff are engaging with attainment data and use this to inform their practice. They are aware of the attainment and achievement gap in their class. The value added was calculated for all learners. This helped staff to identify pupils whose attainment had slowed enabling interventions to be put in place.

All staff have engaged in practitioner enquiry focusing on pedagogy. This has enabled them to reflect on their practice and make improvements based on their research and professional dialogue.

Staff have developed their knowledge and skills in the use of digital technology to support learning and teaching. The new digital strategy is underpinned by the new school vision which makes ensures this an integral part of the learning experience at Blackhall. Staff are becoming skilled at using digital technologies to both support and challenge learners.

The school should continue to develop staff confidence in using the benchmarks across other curricular areas.

Blackhall Primary school has made good progress in both areas highlighted by Education Scotland in September 2017. The QIEO for the school will continue to work with the Head Teacher to support and challenge progress across the school and this will continue to be reported to parents through the Standards and Quality report at the end of each session.