

# Sub-Committee on Standards for Children and Families

10am, Wednesday, 11 March 2020

## Primary School Inspection at Echline Primary and Nursery School

Item number  
Executive/routine  
Wards  
Council Commitments

### 1. Recommendations

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- 1.1 The Sub-committee on Standards for Children and Families 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

**Alistair Gaw**

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# Report

## Primary School Inspection at Echline Primary and Nursery School

### 2. Executive Summary

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- 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.

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.

### 3. Background

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- 3.1 In September 2019, a team of inspectors from Education Scotland and Care Inspectorate visited Echline Primary School and Nursery Class. During their visit, they talked to parents/carers and children and worked closely with the headteacher and staff.

### 4. Main report

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- 4.1 The inspection team found the following strengths in the school's work.
- 4.1.1 Across the nursery and the primary stages, children are well behaved, friendly and proud of their school. The dignity and worth of every child is important and children demonstrate strong empathy towards each other.
  - 4.1.2 The effective leadership of the headteacher, who has put in place important improvements to take the nursery and primary school forward. Together with the depute headteacher and staff, a collaborative culture of improvement is developing across the school.
  - 4.1.3 Across the nursery and the primary stages, there is high quality support for learning. Staff work very well with children who need extra help, enabling them to attain and achieve.

- 4.2 The following areas for improvement were identified and discussed with the headteacher and a representative from The City of Edinburgh Council.
- 4.2.1 In the nursery and in the primary, staff should continue to work together to provide more consistent high quality learning and teaching. This includes increasing pace and challenge. As planned, approaches to assessment need to improve. Children need to understand clearly the skills they are developing and what they need to do to improve further.
  - 4.2.2 Across the nursery and in the primary, staff should continue to raise attainment and achievement in literacy and numeracy.
  - 4.2.3 Staff should develop stronger links with parents and other local partners to improve children’s skills for learning, life and work
- 4.3 More detailed Summarised Inspection Findings will be available from <https://education.gov.scot/media/farplqa1/echlinepsncprimarysif191119.pdf> and is included as an appendix.

4.4 **Measures of Success**

Inspectors gathered evidence to enable them to evaluate the school’s work using 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.

Descriptions of the evaluations are available from How good is our school? (4th edition)

The school also engages in ongoing self-evaluation activity to gather evidence support to support their judgements about what is working well and what needs to be improved.

**Below are the school’s gradings for the following quality indicators, together with Education Scotland’s gradings.**

<u>Quality Indicator</u>	Self-Evaluation	Education Scotland Evaluation
2.3 Learning Teaching and Assessment	3 Satisfactory	3 Satisfactory
3.2 Raising attainment and achievement	4 Good	4 Good
<b>Nursery</b>		
2.3 Learning, Teaching and Assessment	4 Good	3 Satisfactory

3.2 Securing children's progress	4 Good	4 Good
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#### 4.5 **Progress Made with Identified Areas of Development**

In the nursery and in the primary, staff should continue to work together to provide more consistent high-quality learning and teaching. This includes increasing pace and challenge. As planned, approaches to assessment need to improve. Children need to understand clearly the skills they are developing and what they need to do to improve further.

- 4.5.1 Lesson Study - all teaching staff have taken part in CLPL with Edinburgh Learns team around Lesson Study approach. Trios of staff have identified their research questions, linked to differentiation and the first set of shared teaching and learning has taken place. All staff will have taken part and shared feedback by end of May 2020
- 4.5.2 All nursery staff are engaging with reading material around common play behaviours. They have started to identify the common play behaviours in each area and how we differentiate for these. An audit of resources has been carried out and new resources have been purchased to support this approach.

#### 4.6 **Across the nursery and in the primary, staff should continue to raise attainment and achievement in literacy and numeracy.**

- 4.6.1 Shared Classroom experience across cluster has begun - moderation of learning and teaching at key end of level stages - P4, followed by P7 and P1.
- 4.6.2 All nursery staff have undertaken observation training.
- 4.6.3 All nursery staff have taken part in audits of the playroom as well as consultation with the children. The room has been rearranged in order to open up the space and maximise learning opportunities

#### 4.7 **Staff should develop stronger links with parents and other local partners to improve children's skills for learning, life and work.**

- 4.7.1 Pupil groups - all pupils from P4 to P7 are part of a pupil leadership group, focusing on one achievable target for this session, to make a positive difference to their school community by giving pupils a voice in decision making and action.
- 4.7.2 Wider Achievement - children have been working towards the RSPB Wild Challenge Bronze Award.
- 4.7.3 Visits to other nursery settings have taken place providing staff with opportunities to observe good practice. More loose parts have been introduced into the playroom ensuring more opportunities for creativity.

## **5. Next Steps**

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- 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.
- 5.3 City of Edinburgh Education Officers will undertake a follow-through visit to the school within 2 years of publication of the Inspection report.

## **6. Financial impact**

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

## **7. Stakeholder/Community Impact**

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- 7.1 The Inspection 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**

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

## **9. Appendices**

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- 9.1 Appendix 1 Education Scotland letter and evaluations
- 9.2 Appendix 2 Summary of Inspection Findings School
- 9.3 Appendix 3 Summary of Inspection Findings Nursery Class

19 November 2019

Dear Parent/Carer

In September 2019, a team of inspectors from Education Scotland and the Care Inspectorate visited Echline Primary School and Nursery Class. During our visit, we talked to parents/carers and children and worked closely with the headteacher and staff.

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

- Across the nursery and the primary stages, children are well behaved, friendly and proud of their school. The dignity and worth of every child is important and children demonstrate strong empathy towards each other.
- The effective leadership of the headteacher, who has put in place important improvements to take the nursery and primary school forward. Together with the deputy headteacher and staff, a collaborative culture of improvement is developing across the school.
- Across the nursery and the primary stages, there is high quality support for learning. Staff work very well with children who need extra help, enabling them to attain and achieve.

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

- In the nursery and in the primary, staff should continue to work together to provide more consistent high quality learning and teaching. This includes increasing pace and challenge. As planned, approaches to assessment need to improve. Children need to understand clearly the skills they are developing and what they need to do to improve further.
- Across the nursery and in the primary, staff should continue to raise attainment and achievement in literacy and numeracy.
- Staff should develop stronger links with parents and other local partners to improve children's skills for learning, life and work.

We gathered evidence to enable us to evaluate the school's work using quality indicators from [How good is our school? \(4<sup>th</sup> edition\)](#) 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 our evaluations to keep track of how well Scottish schools are doing.

## Here are Education Scotland's evaluations for Echline Primary School and Nursery Class

Quality indicators for the primary school	Evaluation
<b>Learning, teaching and assessment</b>	<b>satisfactory</b>
<b>Raising attainment and achievement</b>	<b>good</b>
Descriptions of the evaluations are available from: <a href="#">How good is our school? (4<sup>th</sup> edition), Appendix 3: The six-point scale</a>	

Quality indicators for the nursery class	Evaluation
<b>Learning, teaching and assessment</b>	<b>satisfactory</b>
<b>Securing children's progress</b>	<b>good</b>
Descriptions of the evaluations are available from: <a href="#">How good is our early learning and childcare? Appendix 1: The six-point scale</a>	

## Here are the Care Inspectorate's gradings for the nursery class

Care Inspectorate standards	Grade
<b>Quality of care and support</b>	<b>good</b>
<b>Quality of environment</b>	<b>good</b>

### Requirements/recommendations made by Care Inspectorate for the nursery class

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

This letter and a more detailed document called Summarised Inspection Findings (SIF) will be available on the Education Scotland website at:

<https://education.gov.scot/inspection-reports/edinburgh-city/5518229>

### 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.

Aileen Monaghan  
HM Inspector

Sonia Priest  
Care Inspector

# Summarised inspection findings

**Echline Primary School and Nursery Class**

The City of Edinburgh Council

19 November 2019

## Key contextual information

Echline Primary School serves the local community of Echline in South Queensferry within the City of Edinburgh Council. There are a few placing requests annually. The current school roll is 302 in the primary, with 30 in the morning and 30 in the afternoon in the nursery. The headteacher has been in post since April 2018. She is supported by a deputy headteacher (since October 2018) and will shortly be appointing a temporary principal teacher post. The school is in the midst of a major building refurbishment. This is now close to completion and is already offering a much improved learning environment.

### 2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

**satisfactory**

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

- The ethos and culture of the school is strong and is reflected in the positive relationships and improving behaviour. The dignity and worth of every child is important and children demonstrate strong empathy towards each other. Staff and parents have recently been consulted on developing the school's vision and values. Senior leaders now plan to involve the children in further consultation, and to have a focus group to develop a visual representation of the vision, values and aims. This will support the development of Echline Primary School's curriculum rationale.
- Children are proud of their school and are aware of the school's focus on ensuring that they are ready to learn, are respectful and feel safe. Children across the school are polite, eager to please, confident, and engage well in activities. They are articulate and happy to share their views and opinions.
- Children have opportunities to be part of school improvement groups and committees across the school. This gives them opportunities to develop their leadership and team-working skills and attributes. Staff should continue to develop children's skills for life and work across all stages of their learning. This will enable children to recognise the skills they are developing and how these can transfer to other areas of their learning. It will also help children to become more involved in planning their learning, to learn independently and to identify their next steps confidently. There is significant scope for children to have more say about how they learn best, and how aspects of school decision making affects them.
- Children enjoy using tablet computers to research their learning activities, and a majority of children use tablets to capture their learning. Teachers should continue, as planned, to develop learning further through the use of digital technologies.
- Staff have been involved in useful professional learning linked to the improvement of learning and teaching pedagogy. A few staff are involved in leadership activities to take forward initiatives to help achieve improvements in learning and teaching. All staff understand that

further work is needed now to enable all staff to deliver high quality practice in learning and teaching consistently across the school.

- Teachers prepare their lessons well. Their explanations and instructions are clear. In most lessons, learning aims are shared and most children are aware of what the expected outcomes can be. Across the school, the majority of lessons are too teacher led. Children would benefit from more opportunities to lead their own learning. When learning is effective, teachers' questioning challenges children's thinking well. Teachers should continue to work collaboratively to develop the range and type of questions they ask. For example, to check for depth of understanding and to challenge and support children more to develop higher order thinking skills. In a majority of lessons, children are not given enough time to think in order to construct answers to teachers' questions.
- In order to improve the pace and level of challenge of learning, tasks and experiences need to be better matched to the needs of all children. There are examples of very effective learning and teaching, but this is not yet consistent across the whole school. Staff understand they need to continue to work collegiately to improve the overall quality of learning and teaching for every child.
- Staff use a range of standardised assessments, such as Scottish National Standardised Assessment (SNSA) to support their professional judgements. Teachers are becoming more confident in identifying children's progress in literacy, numeracy, and health and wellbeing at key milestones. They use National Benchmarks and local authority guidance to identify Curriculum for Excellence levels. Teachers benefit from collaborating with cluster colleagues to moderate standards in writing and mathematics.
- Staff recognise the need to develop a shared understanding and expectations for their approaches to learning, teaching and assessment. This includes more robust moderation activities within and beyond the school. Teachers need to develop further their confidence in gathering, analysing and interpreting data and assessment information. This will enable them to plan differentiated tasks and activities which are better matched to all children's learning needs. Senior leaders and staff should consider what assessment information needs to be gathered to ensure children, including higher attaining learners, progress and achieve well. They should develop these strategic improvements ensuring that all changes are made based on research, best practice and continuous high-quality professional learning.
- Teachers plan learning and teaching across almost areas of the curriculum using progression pathways. Staff identify that improvements in children's learning are being made as a result. Teachers work well with colleagues at the same stage to plan learning and teaching. Staff need to develop more consistent, whole school approaches to ensure robust tracking and monitoring. This can support children make positive progress across all curriculum areas.
- In a few classes children have clear targets for their learning. There is scope now to ensure that high-quality learning targets are set for all children, and that this approach is consistent across the school. Teachers should focus more on improving outcomes for children, including the levels of challenge or support staff need to consider when planning learning.
- Senior leaders, teachers and support for learning staff support children facing potential barriers to their learning very well. A few children benefit from well-planned interventions and targeted programmes, for example to build their confidence and resilience.

## 2.1 Safeguarding and child protection

- 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 that need to be addressed as a matter of urgency.

## 3.2 Raising attainment and achievement

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

- Data presented by the school in 2018-2019 indicates that, overall, in P1, almost all children are achieving appropriate Curriculum for Excellence levels in literacy and numeracy. Attainment is above both the local authority and national levels. In P4 and in P7, most children are achieving appropriate Curriculum for Excellence levels in literacy and numeracy.
- The headteacher is confident that the school's attainment figures in literacy and numeracy are accurate and inspectors observations support this view. There is a range of teacher experience within the school staff. They are continuing collectively to improve their understanding of moderation standards through work within their local cluster. They recognise that that further collaboration beyond the cluster this session will support their understanding of Curriculum for Excellence standards further.
- Support for learning staff use baseline assessments to understand where children may have gaps in learning. The school's assessment data shows that almost all children with additional challenges, are making positive progress.

### Literacy and English language

- Overall, staff report that most children are making good progress in English language and literacy. Children report that they can be stretched further particularly in literacy to attain and achieve more with an increase in pace and challenge. Inspectors observation would support children's views.

### Listening and talking

- Across early level, almost all children are making good progress in listening and talking. Children can talk about simple stories from their reading books and reflect on their activities during their play. During questioning, a majority of children can listen well to and follow instructions. A few children dominate conversations and more work is need to help all children to listen well to each other and take turns to speak. At first level, almost all children are making good progress in listening and talking. In group work and in pairs, children are keen to contribute their ideas and opinions independently. They can develop their own questions across a range of contexts. A majority of children can listen carefully to teacher instructions, recounting their own views. A few children at this level need to focus more on learning to listen to others views to support them to collaborate better. Across second level, most children are making good progress in listening and talking. Children listen actively, collaborating well and can explain their thinking and feedback confidently and with a wide range of vocabulary. A few children use sophisticated language and can put an opposing point of view in a very respectful fashion. The headteacher recognises that tracking and monitoring of children's attainment in listening and talking, using a clear skills progression, is not yet consistent across the school.

## Reading

- Across early level, almost all children are making good progress in reading. They benefit from many opportunities to read books within and beyond school. At early level, teachers are focusing on using a 'talking, reading and writing' approach. They build children's understanding of sounds well and use a range of phonic reading texts to help children to develop their reading skills. Across first level, almost all children are making good progress in reading. Most children can read novels independently and aloud to each other. Children demonstrate strong use of vocabulary, including creative use of adjectives when they describe their reading texts. Staff should continue to widen the choice of reading texts available at first level, enabling children to identify and consider the purpose and main ideas within their chosen texts. Across second level, almost all children are making good progress in reading. Children demonstrate a high level of understanding of how to read and scan complex reading texts to identify particular information. They can answer inferential questions related to a text and can discuss how the writer uses creative language to describe a character. Children use Scots language well to broaden their understanding of their local environment. Staff should continue to support children to improve the quality of their questioning and to develop further their use of higher order thinking skills.

## Writing

- Across early level, almost all children are making good progress. Children enjoy mark making and a few can already write their own sentences through their play activities. By the end of P1, children can write sentences, for example to reflect, given instructions. Across first level, most children are making good progress within a structured talk-based writing curriculum. By the end of first level, children can write within a clear structure with correct spelling and creative use of words. Children write well to entertain, to persuade, to explain and inform. Across second level, most children are making good progress in writing. They write regularly using a wide variety of genres. Children understand the connection between studying the techniques used in their reading texts and then applying these skills well in their own writing tasks. They understand the importance of up-levering writing and demonstrate this well, using similes and connectives to extend sentences and to describe a scene well.

## Numeracy and mathematics

- Overall, attainment in numeracy and mathematics is good. Children requiring additional support, are making satisfactory progress. A few children, particularly at second level, exceed expected levels of attainment and should now experience deeper, more challenging learning. There is scope for children across the school to make more use of digital technology in mathematics, for example in work on shape and information handling.

## Number, money, measure

- Overall, most children are making good progress in number, money and measure. Children working at early level are becoming increasingly confident with a range of number concepts to ten. Children are applying their number skills to measurement investigations, for example, using balance scales and concrete materials. Children who have recently achieved first level can describe numbers up to and beyond 1000 in terms of place value and using zero as a place holder. A minority of children are confident in identifying and describing numbers to hundreds of thousands. Across early and first level, children are making appropriate progress in telling the time, with a few exceeding expectations. They can estimate well measuring objects using non-standard units. At second level, children can round decimal fractions to the nearest whole number and to one and two decimal places. They can convert fractions to decimals and percentages and, importantly, can apply this knowledge in other areas of mathematics, such as probability and data handling. Children at second level are making good progress with mental calculations. A few children work beyond their expected level, for example, they can evaluate mentally, simple whole number powers and roots.

## Shape, position and movement

- Overall, most children are making good progress in shape, position and movement. At early level, children can recognise and describe common 2D shapes and 3D objects using appropriate language. Children at early and first level can recognise and name a range of 3D objects. They are less confident at describing their properties. They can identify right angles in their environment and in common 2D shapes. They can describe movement appropriately using fractions of turns and degrees. Children at second level are developing their knowledge of angles and can name and draw a range of angles including acute, obtuse and straight angles. They apply their ability to accurately draw angles to the nearest degree in other contexts in mathematics, for example in recent work on constructing pie charts.

## Information handling

- Overall, most children are making good progress in information handling. Children at early level can gather data using tally marks and present it in pictograms. At first level, children can describe a variety of ways of gathering data. They can explain the purpose and process of gathering information using tally marks and displaying this using bar graphs. They can interpret simple graphs and charts. Children working at early and first level should be given more opportunities to carry out real-life data handling investigations. At second level children are being given the opportunity to plan and carry out surveys using real-life contexts. For example, at P7, children are currently surveying their peers on their preferences for equipment for the new playground. They plan to display the information gathered using their developing skills in constructing pie charts.

## Attainment over time

- Over the last four years, there is an improving trend in children's attainment in literacy and numeracy at P1. At P4, there is a fluctuating trend over time in attainment in listening and talking with an improvement in the last year. However, there has been a decline in writing attainment at this stage, which the headteacher has recognised and is moving quickly to address. There has been a reduction in numeracy standards at P4 over the same period. The data for P7 demonstrates an improvement in literacy in the last year after the decline shown in the previous three years. There was an improving trend in numeracy from 2015 to 2017 however, there has been a decline in numeracy last session. The headteacher recognises that staff need to strengthen their approaches to gathering attainment data, including tracking children's developing skills over time. Staff need to develop more holistic assessments which allow children to apply their skills creatively in range of different ways, including ways that are unfamiliar to them.

## Overall quality of learners' achievement

- Overall, children's achievement is good. They are confident and contribute well to the life of their school. Their wider achievements are valued, recognised and celebrated, for example through the Echline 'Stars of the Week'. Children in P6 and P7 speak positively about the new interests and skills they are developing in working towards achieving the 'Junior Award Scheme for Schools' (JASS). Children are proud of their successes, including their Eco Schools Scotland awards and their recent success at a local volleyball competition. Children are developing their confidence to express their views by being members of various committees, for example the eco schools committee, sports council and pupil council. Children can identify where their voice has made a difference. For example, they influenced the introduction of recycling points in the school and changes to the way they learn new spelling words. A variety of clubs allow children to develop new skills, for example, in sports, indoor pastimes and arts and craft. A few clubs are run by older children, giving them the opportunity to exercise responsibility and leadership. Older children are developing leadership skills by acting as buddies and House Captains, and leading fundraising activities for charities. The school has begun to monitor children's participation in clubs, sports and music activities,

including those they attend in the community. The headteacher has identified the need to begin to track children's skills development through these activities, as well as levels of participation. This should involve children in reflecting on and recording their own skills progression, and setting targets for personal skills development.

### **Equity for all learners**

- Almost all children within the school live within SIMD deciles 8 to 10, with 2.1% of learners living in areas classified as SIMD decile 3. Senior leaders are well aware of children who face additional challenges and have put in place effective additional support to help them to achieve. Staff provide identified learners with a mixture of individualised and group support, including meaningful support to improve their wellbeing. This approach is helping to make children more resilient. Targeted support for individual children includes literacy and numeracy interventions with, for example, effective short bursts of one-to-one learning support daily, where appropriate.
- Senior leaders and staff are using the Pupil Equity Fund (PEF) to improve staffing levels. The headteacher is monitoring and evaluating the impact of PEF and can demonstrate small improvements in the confidence of almost all of the schools targeted learners.
- The headteacher understands that strong attendance supports improvement, especially for children who face additional challenges. In 2017-2018, attendance was 96.3%, which is above the national average. There were no exclusions last session. The Edinburgh City Council's '1 in 5 - Raising Awareness' project led by staff is helping to ensure that families facing hardship are not disadvantaged. Arrangements, including financial support, are in place to ensure that all children have equity of access to the full range of school activities. The school's parent council has undertaken important fund raising to support this important initiative.

## Other relevant evidence

- The headteacher has been in school for around one year. In her time in post she is leading important improvements. The headteacher has an accurate understanding of the school's standards at present and what they need to do to continue to improve. She is supported by an able depute headteacher and together they are providing purposeful leadership to take the school forward.
- In the pre-inspection questionnaires and from comments received during the inspection, there is a need to continue to improve communication for all stakeholders. Senior leaders understand the importance of strong communication as part of the improvement process. Staff should consider what digital strategies can be put in place to improve communication quickly.

## Explanation of terms of quantity

The following standard Education Scotland terms of quantity are used in this report:

All	100%
Almost all	91%-99%
Most	75%-90%
Majority	50%-74%
Minority/less than half	15%-49%
A few	less than 15%

Other quantitative terms used in this report are to be understood as in common English usage.

# Summarised inspection findings

**Echline Primary School Nursery Class**

The City of Edinburgh Council

19 November 2019

## Key contextual information

Echline Primary School nursery class consists of a large playroom and entrance area, a small parents' room and an outdoor area. At the time of inspection, improvements to the school campus and health and safety issues meant that only one section of the outdoor play area was available for children. There are places for 30 children to attend either morning or afternoon sessions. At the time of inspection, the nursery roll was 49. There have been recent changes to the staff team. The deputy headteacher, ELC teacher, practitioners and support assistants work together with a variety of full and part-time working patterns. Effective arrangements to protect time for regular meetings and professional learning continue to evolve.

### 2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

**satisfactory**

This indicator focuses on ensuring high quality learning experience for young children. It highlights the importance of a very good understanding of child development and early learning pedagogy. Effective use is made of observation to inform future learning and identify the progress made. Children are involved in planning for their own learning. Together these ensure children's successes and achievements are maximised. The themes are:

- learning and engagement
- quality of teaching
- effective use of assessment
- planning, tracking and monitoring

- During the nursery session, most children engage well with the range of experiences available. Practitioners make good use of partners to enhance children's learning experiences. Children make choices confidently about where they want to play. This includes moving freely between indoors and outdoors. The majority of children concentrate for extended periods, for example, using building blocks and exploring sensory activities. Increasingly, practitioners are providing open-ended and natural materials to support children's play. Building on this, there is scope to extend this further to develop children's creativity, curiosity and inquiry.
- All practitioners are caring, respectful and responsive in their interactions with children and positive relationships are evident. Practitioners' skills continue to develop in using questions and commentary to support and extend learning. As recognised by the setting, there is not yet a shared understanding of effective pedagogy across the staff team. Practitioners should continue to engage in professional dialogue, to agree the vision and approach for the nursery that will meet the needs of all children. This should include a review of the balance of adult-directed and child-initiated play. Children would benefit from more time and space to influence and lead their own play. Practitioners have identified that there is scope to develop further the use of digital technologies to support learning and teaching.
- The nursery teacher gathers information on aspects of children's learning using a variety of methods. There is scope to develop the skills and confidence of all practitioners to have an active role in assessing, planning and evaluating children's learning. This will enable practitioners to know children well as learners, in order to inform next steps in learning.
- All children have a record of learning containing photographic evidence and observations. The frequency, range and quality of practitioners' observations mean that there is not yet a holistic picture of children's learning. Senior leaders and practitioners have correctly identified this as an area for improvement. Practitioners now need to develop a consistent approach to identifying and recording significant learning. This will support practitioners to identify relevant

next steps for children's learning and ensure children continue to make the progress they are capable of.

- Parents receive information regarding their child's progress on an ongoing basis. In addition, parents have the opportunity to meet with the nursery teacher to discuss their child's development and learning. In addition, practitioners share information with P1 colleagues to support continuity for children.
- Senior leaders and practitioners need to develop further, processes for planning, tracking and monitoring of children's learning. A streamlined and collaborative approach should be adopted. Currently, practitioners use trackers to record aspects of children's learning. This is at an early stage and needs time to develop and embed, to demonstrate effectively children's progress over time. Robust monitoring will be required to identify where children need further support and challenge in their learning.
- Planning for children who require additional support with their learning is effective and consistent strategies are implemented by practitioners to ensure all children continue to develop and learn.

## 2.1 Safeguarding and child protection

- 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 that need to be addressed as a matter of urgency.

### 3.2 Securing children's progress

good

This indicator relates to the development and learning of babies, toddlers and young children. It requires clear understanding of early learning and development and pedagogy. It reflects the integrated way young children learn and the importance of experiences and development happening on an individual basis within a supportive, nurturing and stimulating environment. High quality early learning and childcare contributes significantly to enhancing children's progress and achievement as they grow and learn. It can benefit all children by closing the attainment gap and ensuring equity for all. It is about the holistic nature of development and learning ensuring these foundations are secure in order to achieve future attainment success. The themes are:

- progress in communication, early language, mathematics, and health and wellbeing
- children's progress over time
- overall quality of children's achievement
- ensuring equity for all children

- Most children are making good progress in early literacy and communication. Most children are confident and articulate as they sustain conversations with adults and one another. Children listen attentively to practitioners as they follow instructions well in the school gym hall. A few children access books independently for enjoyment and also to find out information. Almost all children enjoy mark making as they 'sign in' to nursery, write the menu for snack and represent their name. Children add detail to line drawings of themselves and enjoy recalling their experiences. Most children can recognise their name and a few confidently identify initial letter sounds. Children are developing their phonological awareness through favourite traditional stories and rhymes. A few older children write and copy short, familiar words as they make invitations. Most children are now ready for further challenge to extend and develop further their learning.
- Most children are making good progress in numeracy and early mathematics. Children are developing a good understanding of mathematical language, as they identify if they need more or less to complete a task. A few children enjoy exploring the concepts of volume in the water tray. Most children can identify and draw a few 2D shapes such as square and circle. A few older children enjoy playing with the scales as they weigh vegetables. There is scope to extend the breadth and depth of early mathematical experiences. Progressive opportunities for children to deepen their understanding of number, record information in different ways and apply their skills creatively to solve problems should be increased.
- Most children are making good progress in health and wellbeing. In particular, focused work on emotional literacy means most children talk with understanding about their emotions and feelings. Almost all children cooperate and play well together as they share and take turns in the playroom. Children are developing a good understanding of healthy lifestyles as they talk about how their bodies feel after running and jumping. Children's fine motor skills are developing well as they use a knife to help cut fruit. Almost all children, including those new to the setting, show a well-developed understanding of how to keep themselves safe as they use tools at the woodwork bench. Children should now be supported to make connections in their learning in a way that is appropriate to their skills and stage of development.
- Information gathered from inspection activities, professional dialogue with practitioners, documentation and feedback from parents, demonstrates that children are making good progress across their learning. Currently, the process for gathering and recording children's learning and progress over time does not fully reflect the progress they are capable of making.

- Practitioners, parents and children are beginning to share information about children's achievements outwith nursery. The 'I Can' tree provides a focus to celebrate learning and achievements. Children require support from practitioners to increasingly identify their talents, skills and achievements. The team need to ensure this information helps to inform the early learning and childcare provision, including addressing any gaps in children's experiences.
- Practitioners are mindful and respectful of the individual circumstances of children and families. There is a sensitive and respectful approach to ensuring all children access the full range of experiences within the nursery. The team have an inclusive approach and work well with parents and other agencies to reduce potential barriers to learning. As tracking and monitoring approaches improve, a fuller picture of the impact of interventions will be able to influence the work of the team and partners.

### 1. Quality of care and support

There was a welcoming atmosphere in the nursery and staff were nurturing and respectful in their interactions with children. Children were confident and relaxed in their environment and were able to approach staff when they needed further support. Through a variety of experiences, staff supported children to develop the necessary skills for self-regulation, to be independent and to play cooperatively with their peers.

Staff knew the children in their care well. A variety of processes were used to gather children's personal plan information in consultation with parents/carers. This meant that staff were knowledgeable about how to support children's individual needs including any additional support, medication or dietary needs. Progress was now needed to consolidate children's personal plan information to clearly demonstrate that reviews have been carried out a minimum of once every six months or sooner if changes were needed. This would help ensure that all information was accurate and clearly outlined the stepped approach/strategies to support children's individual care needs.

Staff had a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities in safeguarding children in their care and were knowledgeable of the procedures to follow in the event of having any concerns. Children's wellbeing was further supported by staff acknowledging and helping them to recognise their own emotions and feelings. Children's achievements were routinely recognised by staff through praise and encouragement as well as using the 'I can' tree and 'learning wall' to share key information. Such approaches helped support children's self-esteem and confidence.

Snack routines promoted healthy eating and provided children with opportunities to learn new skills. For example, children were involved in the preparation of snack and this included learning how to chop fruit safely and about the importance of hand washing. Children could choose when to have their snack and their independence was supported by serving their own drinks and choosing from the daily snack menu. To support children's hydration, facilities for them to be able to independently access drinking water throughout the session was to be progressed.

**Care Inspectorate grade: good**

### 2. Quality of environment

Children were kept safe as the entrance to the building was secure and the indoor environment was clean and well maintained. Staff also carried out daily assessments of the indoor and outdoor environments to help identify and address any potential hazards. To further assist with the ongoing monitoring and assessment of the environment, the development of further prompts for staff and risk assessment information would be beneficial. For example, to consider the layout of the environment and any changes made, the resources and equipment.

Staff were reflective of their practice and described the changes they had made to the environment to support positive outcomes for children. This had included developing further creative opportunities, the expansion of the block play area and the provision of different types of play including loose parts. These experiences had helped develop children's curiosity and imagination.

Children had access to a variety of activities which took account of their interests and learning needs. Through discussions and support from staff, children had the opportunity to learn about keeping themselves safe and to manage risks and challenges. For example, through using the outdoor play equipment, preparing snack and using the woodwork bench.

Children's health and wellbeing was enhanced as staff understood the importance of fresh air and active play. Children had daily access to outdoor play where they enjoyed opportunities including climbing, using wheeled equipment, painting and imaginative play. At times, children did not have access to the grassed area or the experiences available there. In addition, to ensure child safety, part of this area was also closed as maintenance of equipment was needed. Therefore, a review of the available outdoor space would help ensure that children's choice and their outdoor experiences were not limited.

There was a commitment to continue with the improvement of the nursery environment to promote positive outcomes for children. This was to be progressed through further use of best practice publications and the ongoing review of the space used, presentation of resources and the provision of more natural resources.

### Care Inspectorate grade: good

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

## Explanation of terms of quantity

The following standard Education Scotland terms of quantity are used in this report:

All	100%
Almost all	91%-99%
Most	75%-90%
Majority	50%-74%
Minority/less than half	15%-49%
A few	less than 15%

Other quantitative terms used in this report are to be understood as in common English usage.