

Sub-Committee on Standards for Children and Families

10:00am, Wednesday 25th September 2019

Primary School Inspection at St Ninian's Primary School

Item number
Executive/routine
Wards
Council Commitments

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 The Sub-committee is asked 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

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Report

Primary Inspection at St Ninian's Primary School

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. 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

- 3.1 In April 2019, a team of inspectors from Education Scotland and Care Inspectorate visited St Ninian's Primary School and Nursery Class. (Short model of Inspection). During their visit, they talked to parents/carers and children and worked closely with the headteacher and staff.

4. Main report

- 4.1 The inspection team found the following strengths in the school's work:
- The headteacher's leadership of the school's and nursery's inclusive values, ensuring children and their families are supported well.
 - The approachable staff team who work together effectively to welcome parents and partners. The strong partnerships that lead to children feeling cared for and who enjoy learning.
 - Friendly children who are confident in their social interactions with one another, staff and visitors to their school.
 - The positive progress children are making in their learning through consistent approaches in the teaching of reading and English.
 - Engaging and energetic outdoor play experiences in the nursery that develop children's imagination and vocabulary and promotes their wellbeing.

- 4.2 The following areas for improvement were identified and discussed with the headteacher and a representative from The City of Edinburgh Council:
- Continue to raise attainment and improve progress for all children in writing and numeracy.
 - Share best practice to ensure consistency in high quality learning and teaching.

4.3 More detailed Summarised Inspection Findings will be available from <https://education.gov.scot/assets/inspectionreports/stniniansrcpsprimarysif250619.pdf>

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)

- 4.5 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.

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

1. Quality Indicator	Self Evaluation	Education Scotland Evaluation
2.3 Learning Teaching and Assessment	4 Good	4 Good
3.2 Raising attainment and achievement	4 Good	4 Good

Progress Made with Identified Areas of Development

There is a clear focus in the School Improvement Plan this session to ensure focus on these areas including the following:

- 4.6 **Continue to raise attainment and improve progress for all children in writing and numeracy.**

- Staff to attend James Clements training for teaching Writing
- School to take on 'Imagine Project' to improve engagement of pupils in writing experience and to raise attainment
- Sharing of best practice in writing with school and cluster colleagues
- Develop mental maths teaching and learning at all levels across the school
- Teach the language of maths particularly to EAL pupils

4.7 **Share best practice to ensure consistency in high quality learning and teaching.**

- The school has a robust plan for quality assurance in place.

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 Professional 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

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

7. Stakeholder/Community Impact

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

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

9. Appendices

9.1 Appendix 1 Education Scotland letter and evaluations

9.2 Appendix 2 Summary of Inspection Findings

25 June 2019

Dear Parent/Carer

In April 2019, a team of inspectors from Education Scotland visited St Ninian's RC 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.

- The headteacher's leadership of the school's and nursery's inclusive values, ensuring children and their families are supported well.
- The approachable staff team who work together effectively to welcome parents and partners. The strong partnerships that lead to children feeling cared for and who enjoy learning.
- Friendly children who are confident in their social interactions with one another, staff and visitors to their school.
- The positive progress children are making in their learning through consistent approaches in the teaching of reading and English.
- Engaging and energetic outdoor play experiences in the nursery that develop children's imagination and vocabulary and promotes their wellbeing.

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

- Continue to raise attainment and improve progress for all children in writing and numeracy.
- Share best practice to ensure consistency in high quality learning and teaching.

We gathered evidence to enable us 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 our evaluations to keep track of how well Scottish schools are doing.

Here are Education Scotland's evaluations for St Ninian's RC Primary School

Quality indicators for the primary school	Evaluation
Learning, teaching and assessment	good
Raising attainment and achievement	good
Descriptions of the evaluations are available from: How good is our school? (4th edition), Appendix 3: The six-point scale	

Quality indicators for the nursery class	Evaluation
Learning, teaching and assessment	good
Securing children's progress	good
Descriptions of the evaluations are available from: How good is our early learning and childcare? Appendix 1: The six-point scale	

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/5530326>

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.

Susan Gow
HM Inspector

Summarised inspection findings

St Ninian's RC Primary School and Nursery Class

The City of Edinburgh Council

25 June 2019

Key contextual information

The school serves a wide area in the north east of Edinburgh. The population consists predominantly of families whose first language is not English. At the time of the inspection the proportion of children attending the school who have English as an additional language is 65%.

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

- Across the school, children benefit from learning in an inclusive, supportive ethos. The positive climate across the school helps children to feel valued. The school values of being 'Ready to Learn, Respectful and Safe' are displayed in corridors and classrooms, with teachers making meaningful reference to these in most classes. Positive relationships are evident between staff and children. Across the school, teachers use a wide variety of interesting activities to create a purposeful learning environment. Play-based learning at the early level supports children to feel ready to learn.
- Most children are motivated and engage positively in their learning. They are respectful and listen carefully to their teachers and their peers. Most children are confident learners, working effectively in groups and pairs. In almost all lessons, learning activities and tasks are well planned and differentiated in order to meet the needs of learners. Children identify that they would like more choice within their learning. The school's plan to measure engagement and participation would allow teachers to evaluate the impact of increased opportunities for pupil voice and more choice.
- Most children are confident when discussing their learning and can identify their next steps. Visual displays of individual targets for children are helpful reminders of what children need to do to make progress in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. In all classes, children are involved in planning aspects of their learning, especially in relation to interdisciplinary learning. Older children take on leadership roles within their class or within the school. There is scope to involve more children in leadership opportunities and to support them in understanding the skills they are developing through these roles.

Quality of teaching

- Overall, the quality of teaching is good, with aspects of very strong practice. Teachers are developing effective approaches to learning, teaching and assessment in order to improve children's learning experiences and raise attainment. This includes all staff participating in professional learning opportunities to ensure a structured approach to teaching reading and developing early numeracy skills.

- Teachers know their children well and implement teaching approaches to meet the needs of their classes. Clear instructions are given and checks for understanding are evident in practice. In a few lessons, effective questioning is developing higher-order thinking skills. This is not yet consistent across the school.
- Teachers use interactive whiteboards effectively. They provide a focus for direct teaching and consolidation of learning. In a few lessons, children use tablets well to support their learning. They are set challenge tasks in numeracy and mathematics using QR codes. The school should continue with its plan to use digital technologies more widely to support learners.

Effective use of assessment

- In almost all lessons, children understand the purpose of the lesson. In the best examples, children are involved in identifying what they need to do to be successful. Feedback on progress and next steps in learning is shared with children and parents through 'Sharing our Learning' workbooks. These workbooks, along with class learning logs, allow children to reflect on their learning and identify strengths and next steps.
- Teachers assess ongoing progress as part of daily learning and teaching. Assessment for learning strategies are evident in all classes, with teachers adapting lessons and providing support appropriately during learning experiences. The school's 'Learning and Teaching Toolkit', provides helpful guidance on the effective use of core strategies to support learning. Across the school, children would benefit from more thinking time.
- Assessment information is used effectively to identify and plan targeted interventions for children in literacy and numeracy in order to ensure progress. Ongoing observations, diagnostic, summative, and standardised assessments provide evidence of progress. Pupil support assistants provide effective support to individual learners and groups of learners. Teachers work together to develop holistic assessments. This provides appropriate opportunities for children to apply their learning. The range of assessment evidence, along with professional dialogue, is used well to inform teacher professional judgements regarding progress within a level and achievement of a level.
- A range of moderation activities takes place across stages, across levels and with other schools. Teachers are becoming more familiar with national benchmarks and are developing a shared understanding of progress. This has resulted in increased teacher confidence in making robust professional judgements about achievement of a level.

Planning, tracking and monitoring

- Teachers plan well together using the experiences and outcomes for all curricular areas. They plan collaboratively within levels and this supports progression through a level. Assessment opportunities are identified at the planning stage. Teachers identify that this collaborative planning is helping to share practice, support differentiation and develop a common understanding of progress within a level and achievement of a level.
- There are regular, planned opportunities for the senior leadership team and teachers to discuss and monitor the progress of all children across the school. Concerns around the progress of individual children lead to agreed action points and monitoring of any interventions. Tracking of groups of children who are facing additional challenges is in place and this supports the school in measuring the impact of any planned interventions. The progress of children who have English as an additional language is tracked and monitored carefully. This supports staff in identifying children who may have a barrier to learning.

- Children's progress within Curriculum for Excellence is monitored at agreed points throughout the session. The school's tracking system provides helpful information on progress in literacy and numeracy. Teachers are provided with a class overview of progress within Curriculum for Excellence. Using a range of assessment information and professional dialogue, teachers make predictions on whether children are on track with their learning, or if a targeted intervention is needed to ensure appropriate progress. As discussed with the headteacher, a next step is to track children's progress in all curriculum areas.

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. At the time of the inspection, there were no identified areas for development.

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

- Overall children are making good progress in literacy and English, and numeracy and mathematics.
- Teachers make effective use of assessment and national benchmarks. Their approaches to moderation are increasingly rigorous and lead to more reliable teacher judgements about children's progress. Teachers should continue to collaborate through their level planning and challenge one another's judgements to ensure growing consistency and reliability. A few children at early and first level are making very good progress, including those who have English as an additional language. The school is addressing the slower rate of progress of children by the end of second level.

Attainment in literacy and English

- Overall, attainment in literacy and English is good. Across the school, most children are making appropriate progress but there remains a need to address a slowing of progress and challenge towards the end of second level. A few high attaining children are making very good progress and most children who have English as an additional language are making good progress overall. Children requiring additional support in literacy, are making appropriate progress.

Listening and talking

- Most children are making good progress in talking and listening. At the early level, most children listen attentively and follow instructions well. They listen carefully to instructions and work independently when asked. The nurturing approaches to early acquisition of language result in children making good progress in verbal communications. At first level, most children are developing confidence and share their views. They listen well to the views of others and know how to take turns when working in pairs. They respond well to literal questions about texts and give clear explanations for their answers. By second level, most children voice their opinions articulately and a few build on one another's ideas. They talk knowledgeably about a variety of books they have read.

Reading

- Overall, most children are making good progress in reading. They engage with a variety of fiction and non-fiction texts and make good use of class libraries. At the early level, most children apply a wide range of phonological awareness to read unfamiliar words and a growing range of vocabulary. They read with good understanding. At first level, most children read with confidence and tackle unfamiliar words. They identify and discuss their favourite authors and are now capable of being challenged through a broader range of reading experiences. They are developing skills in scanning for information. By second level, most children are developing skills in responding to comprehension questions about what they have read. They are motivated to read and keen to be involved in the recently refurbished school library. The

school should take forward its plans to continue broadening children's reading skills through book festivals and author visits.

Writing

- Attainment in writing is satisfactory. Overall, the majority of children are making good progress in writing. Children are supported effectively through the school's approaches to reading and spelling. Those who have English as an additional language, are supported very effectively and as a result are making appropriate progress. The school recognises the need to ensure high expectations are set for all children. At the early level, most children are developing confidence to write independently. The majority of children attempt to write simple sentences accurately, using capital letters and full stops. At first level, most children use an increasing variety of connectives and are developing writing skills for a growing range of purposes. At first and second levels, children set targets in writing and are developing an understanding of how to improve their writing. At second level, most children use paragraphs appropriately and apply a range of punctuation and imaginative vocabulary to engage the reader. Overall, the quality of children's written work needs to be consistently and further improved across the school.

Numeracy and mathematics

- Overall, attainment in numeracy and mathematics is good for most children at early and first level and for the majority of children at second level. Most children for whom English is an additional language are making good progress.

Number, money and measure

- Children at the early level, are developing a range of strategies to solve problems in different contexts. Those at first and second level, need to develop their skills in applying a wider range of mental strategies to handle basic calculations. At the early level, most children add and subtract within ten and confidently count and recognise numbers up to 30. Most children name and recognise coins up to a value of £2. Most children at first level sequence numbers and round numbers to the nearest hundred. Most children add and subtract three digit numbers accurately. Children are less confident in calculations which require more than one operation especially those relating to handling money in a real life context. Most children accurately estimate and measure lengths and, with support, most calculate the perimeter and area of a regular shape. At second level, the majority of children are confident in simplifying fractions and can sequence numbers, including those with a negative value. The majority of children compare the properties of different rectangles. Children are less assured in calculations involving decimals.

Shape, position and movement

- Most children are developing their understanding of 2D shapes and 3D objects. At the early level, most children recognise and comment on some of the features of 2D shapes. They are developing their understanding of positional language through play. Children at first level identify a range of 2D shapes and 3D objects in everyday life. The majority of children demonstrate the ability to follow directions using appropriate signs, angles and compass points. Most children working at first and second level have a clear understanding of lines of symmetry. In exploring shape, children working at second level would benefit from opportunities to revisit, consolidate and embed earlier learning about angles. At second level, the majority of children solve simple algebraic equations.

Information handling

- Children are developing skills in gathering and presenting information. Most children working at early level gather and sort objects according to simple criteria. At first and second levels, most children are aware of different ways to present information. They display information using tally marks, pie charts and bar graphs. At second level, the majority of children draw conclusions

based on information gathered and displayed. There is scope for children to develop their skills in the gathering, organising and presenting of data through using digital technologies.

Attainment over time

- Data presented by the school, demonstrates the majority of children are achieving appropriate Curriculum for Excellence levels in reading, writing, listening and talking and numeracy and mathematics. There are signs that the systematic and structured approaches to early acquisition of language and numeracy are having a positive impact on increased progress for children at early and first levels. The headteacher makes effective use of tracking and monitoring of children's progress to ensure they are well supported in their learning. Teachers work well together to implement effective approaches consistently across the school. They challenge one another's judgements and are developing confidence in the use of benchmarks and holistic assessment. The school is well-placed to continue to raise attainment.

Overall quality of learners' achievement

- The school promotes an ethos that values and celebrates children's achievements within the school and the wider community. Children's achievements are captured and displayed prominently around the school and celebrated in school assemblies. Social media is used to good effect to publicise and share activities and successes with parents.
- Children speak positively of the opportunities they have which allows them to extend their learning and achievement beyond the classroom. They are increasing their understanding of social issues and their responsibilities as caring citizens through local and international charity efforts. Through recycling and 'food to the table' projects children are increasing their understanding of environmental issues. This is acknowledged with the school receiving ECO Green Flag and Fairtrade status.
- Within the school's house system, children assume the roles of captains and vice-captains. The school's Young Leaders programme allows children to take responsibility and apply their skills and interests in a number of roles including as digital leaders. Children contribute positively to the wellbeing of others. They are developing an understanding of the World of Work and the skills of learning through STEM related activities, and career focused events.
- Children access a range of clubs offered by staff and the Active Schools coordinator. This is enabling children to widen their interests and develop their skills. Children in P7 are developing confidence, self-esteem and social skills through the school's health week and residential excursion. Maintaining an overview of participation in activities will support staff in targeting those children who may be at risk of missing out.
- Moving forward, more children would benefit from being actively involved as leaders. This would enable them to take roles with increased responsibilities and to build on the skills they develop. There is scope to explore the options for more formal accreditation for the contribution which children are making to school life and beyond.

Equity

- The headteacher and staff know children and their families very well. All staff work closely together to provide high quality support leading to children achieving success. Barriers to learning are targeted through effective use of the Pupil Equity Funding (PEF). The school's work is having a positive impact on outcomes for children who need help to overcome barriers to their learning. This has been particularly successful in addressing the teaching of reading. The development of the 'Adventure Room' is providing children at the early level and start of first level with opportunities to apply skills in talking and listening, through play. Targeted interventions support children and their families effectively. Staff are successful in ensuring

children whose first language is not English are making good progress. The school is successfully raising attainment for all children.

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.