

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

GOVERNANCE AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 18 DECEMBER 2009

HER MAJESTY'S INSPECTORATE OF EDUCATION AND CARE
COMMISSION INSPECTION REPORTS
2008-2009

Report by Executive Director of Educational and Social Services

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 To advise Governance and Scrutiny of the performance of schools and pre-school centres following external scrutiny by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) and the Care Commission (CC) during financial year 2008-2009.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 HMIE's principal activity is to promote sustainable improvements in standards, quality and achievements for all learners in a Scottish education through first-hand independent evaluation. Rigorous independent inspections and reviews of schools and other educational establishments, community learning and the education functions of local councils help ensure this continuous improvement. Inspections and evaluations inform parents, schools and colleges, other providers of education, and the Scottish Ministers about standards and quality in education. Importantly, the reports identify key strengths, indicate where improvement is needed and offer suggestions on the scope for drawing on best practice elsewhere. It remains important that the evidence deriving from inspections and reviews continues to inform educational policy and practice.
- 2.2 The CC was set up in 2002 under the **Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001** to regulate all adult, child and independent healthcare services in Scotland and ensure that care service providers meet the Scottish Government's National Care Standards and work to improve the quality of care.
- 2.3 In early years centres HMIE and the CC conduct integrated inspections to evaluate the quality of provision related to both education and care. In 2008-2009 no integrated inspections took place in East Ayrshire.
- 2.4 Both HMIE and the CC report performance on a six point scale as follows:
Level 6 excellent - outstanding or sector leading

Level 5 very good	- major strengths
Level 4 good	- important strengths with areas for improvement
Level 3 satisfactory	- strengths just outweigh weaknesses
Level 2 weak	- important weaknesses
Level 1 unsatisfactory	- major weaknesses.

3. HMIE AND CC INSPECTIONS 2008-2009

3.1 During financial year 2008-2009 a total of 25 establishments were inspected by either HMIE or the CC. These comprise:

- five nursery schools
 - eight nursery classes in primary schools
 - five community nurseries
- all of the above inspected by the CC,
- and seven schools inspected by HMIE

3.2 Care Commission Inspections of Local Authority Early Years Centres

Establishment	Date	Quality of Care and Support	Environment	Staffing	Leadership
Auchinleck NS	12/11/2008	5	5	5	5
Catrine NS	22/10/2008	5	4	4	4
Crosshouse NS	15/01/1009	5	5	5	5
Drongan NS	21/11/2008	5	5	5	5
Galston NS	05/03/2009	5	5	5	5
Dalmellington NC	27/02/2009	6	5	5	5
Dalrymple NC	18/03/2009	5	5	5	5
Gragieston NC	11/02/2009	5	5	5	5
Littlemill NC	19/11/2008	5	5	5	5
Nether Robertland NC	23/03/2009	5	5	5	5
New Farm NC	23/01/2009	5	5	5	5
Patna NC	09/03/2009	5	5	5	5
St Andrew's NC	24/11/2008	5	5	5	5
Bellsbank NFC	15/10/2008	5	5	5	5
Flowerbank NFC	02/03/2008	6	5	5	5
Hillbank NFC	18/02/2009	6	5	5	5
Netherthird NFC	17/02/2009	5	5	5	5
Shortlees NFC	25/02/2009	5	5	5	5

Within the four Quality Indicators evaluated there were:

- Level 6 = 3
- Level 5 = 66
- Level 4 = 3

Below Level 4 = nil

3.3 Private and Voluntary Sector Partners

Establishment	Date	Quality of Care and Support	Environment	Staffing	Leadership
Beechwood	23/11/2008	5	5	4	5
Jacaranda	14/10/2008	4	5	4	4
Burns Bairns	10/02/2009	5	5	5	5
Dean Park	03/03/2009	5	4	4	4
Grasshoppers	15/12/2008	4	4	4	4
St Columba's	11/12/2008	5	5	5	5
KC Tots	17/12/2008	5	5	5	5
Little Angels	10/02/2009	5	5	5	5
New Farm Loch	09/02/2009	4	4	4	4
Newmilns	07/01/2009	5	5	4	4

Within the four Quality Indicators evaluated there were:

Level 6 = nil

Level 5 = 22

Level 4 = 17

Below Level 4 = nil

3.4 School Inspection Reports

Establishment	Date	Improvements in Performance	Learners' Experiences	Meeting Learning Needs	Curriculum	Improvement through Self-evaluation
Bellsbank PS	07/10/2008	3	3	2	3	3
Dunlop PS	02/09/2008	5	4	4	5	4
Dunlop NC		4	4	4		
Muirkirk PS	17/03/2009	4	4	4	4	4
Muirkirk NC		4	4	3		
Newmilns PS	18/11/2008	4	4	3	3	2
St Sophia's PS	25/11/2008	4	4	3	4	3
Woodstock School	17/03/2009	5	6	5	5	5
Cumnock Ac	18/11/2008	5	5	5	5	6

Within the five Quality Indicators evaluated there were:

Level 6 = 2

Level 5 = 11

Level 4 = 18

Level 3 = 9

Level 2 = 2

4. KEY STRENGTHS AND AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT (Afl) REPORTED IN HMIE INSPECTIONS

4.1 Bellsbank Primary School:

Strengths

- The commitment of staff to providing a caring and supportive environment
- Ways in which staff used the range of resources, including information and communications technology, to develop pupils' skills across the curriculum
- Motivated pupils at the upper stages who were eager participants in their learning
- The school's effective partnership working with a range of organisations

Afl

- Approaches to planning the curriculum to ensure improved focus on outcomes and progression
- Performance in English language and mathematics and the tracking of pupils' progress
- The development of pupils' personal and social skills including the promotion of values and respect
- Meeting pupils' learning needs
- Leadership and self-evaluation including the sharing of good practice across the school

Dunlop Primary School:

Strengths

- The enthusiasm of children and pupils and their creative approaches to enterprise, sustainable development and health promotion
- High levels of commitment by all staff to the care and welfare of children and pupils
- Standards of pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics
- The impact of the contributions made by members of the local community on the quality of learners' experiences
- The leadership of the headteacher and the quality of teamwork across the staff

Afl

- Continue to improve approaches to the way information gathered from assessments is used to ensure that the needs of all pupils are met appropriately
- Address the accommodation issues raised in this report

Muirkirk Primary School:

Strengths

- Polite, well-mannered children who are keen to learn

- The commitment of all staff to the care and welfare of children
- The involvement of children in wider community projects which enhance their learning
- The leadership of the headteacher and teamwork of staff

Afl

- In the nursery class, further develop literacy and numeracy through play Develop the nursery outdoor area to engage children more in motivating play activities
- Continue to raise attainment in reading, writing and mathematics at the primary stages
- Improve the pace of learning and increase the challenge for children at P1-P7
- Share the most effective teaching practice to ensure a more consistent approach across all stages

Newmilns Primary School:

Strengths

- Strong partnership working with other professionals to support the social, emotional and welfare needs to children
- Polite and helpful children who are keen and eager to learn
- Mutual respect between staff and children
- The work of staff in tracking children's progress which was helping to raise attainment in English language and mathematics
- Use the findings from self evaluation activities to guide future improvements

Afl

- Ensure teachers use a range of information to meet the needs of all learners
- Provide more opportunities for children to be involved and active in their learning
- Continue to encourage parents' involvement in their children's learning, including those children with individual education and support plans

St Sophia's Primary School:

Strengths

- The commitment of the headteacher and the staff to the school community
- Well behaved, cooperative children who are motivated to learn
- Increasing opportunities for children to benefit from a wider range of learning experiences
- Strong caring ethos within the school

Afl

- Improve the pace of learning and provide more challenge for all children, particularly the more able

- Involve children more actively in making progress in their learning and help them develop the skills of more independent learners
- Continue to develop the school's approaches to self-evaluation
- Continue to take forward their work in line with Curriculum for Excellence

Woodstock School:

Strengths

- Young people's progress in communication and language, and their confidence and self-esteem
- The headteacher's outstanding leadership
- Highly supportive partnerships with parents and carers
- The outstanding learning experiences within the school and in the wider community
- Innovative approaches to ensuring that children and young people's views are listened to and value

Afl

- Further develop existing good practice in challenging young people across the school
- Extend the length of the school week
- In partnership with the education authority address the accommodation issues in this report

Cumnock Academy:

Strengths

- The strong lead given by the headteacher and senior managers to improving the school
- The excellent school improvement procedures
- Members of staff are strongly committed to the school and fully involved in its life and work
- Friendly and confident young people who are actively involved in the school and community
- Very positive relationships and mutual respect between adults in the school and learners
- The very effective work of the multi-agency team to support young people and their families

Afl

- Continue to develop the curriculum in line with Curriculum for Excellence and to ensure young people transferring from primary can build well on their earlier learning
- The school should review provision in S5 and S6 to ensure that all pupils have access to high quality physical education.

5. FOLLOW-THROUGH PROCESS

- 5.1** Following an inspection, educational establishments are required to produce an action plan, in consultation with staff, pupils and parents, setting out how they will address the areas for improvement identified in the report. Based on the degree to which specific actions are required the link Quality Improvement Officer will work with the head of establishment and staff in the production of the action plan. Quality Improvement Officers and other central support staff play a key roll in supporting and challenging the establishment in the process of improvement over the following 20 to 24 months.
- 5.2** This support and challenge role involves Officers in the scrutiny and evaluation of the quality of:
- subsequent improvement planning processes
 - consultation and engagement with staff, pupils and parents
 - annual Standards and Quality Reports
 - improvements in performance based on attainment in 5-14 National Assessments and National qualifications
 - learners' wider achievements
 - learners' experiences through class visits and lesson observation
 - the extent to which the needs of all learners are being met
 - the curriculum
 - the impact on learning arising from self-evaluation.
- 5.3** The evidence gathered over this period contributes to the production of an authority Follow-through Report which sets out the:
- strengths of the establishment
 - areas for improvement set out in the original report
 - extent to which the establishment has made overall improvements in performance
 - degree to which each area for improvement have been overtaken
 - capacity of the establishment for continuous improvement.
- 5.4** Where HMIE indicate in the original report that they will make no further visits to an establishment in relation to the inspection, the authority will publish the Follow-through Report providing copies for the establishment and parents. Follow-through reports are also available on-line. If the inspection agency has indicated that they will revisit an establishment the authority Follow-through Report is the basis for the evaluation of progress made against the areas for improvement. This Follow-through Report is a measure of the extent to which the authority has committed to the processes for support and challenge and the extent to which the authority knows how good its schools and early years settings are.

- 5.5 To date no educational establishment has failed to successfully address areas for improvement identified in an inspection report and achieve a positive outcome as a result of the support and challenge provided by the authority.

6. ACTION PLANNING

- 6.1 School Improvement Plans reflect the priorities identified through the process of audit, review and evaluation carried out in consultation with staff, pupils and parents. However such plans need to be flexible enough to respond to the changing educational environment in which schools operate, not least following an inspection by HMIE. Addressing the areas for improvement following an inspection becomes an integral part of the improvement planning process. Existing improvement plans are therefore adjusted to incorporate the areas for improvement identified by HMIE rather than create a separate and free-standing HMIE Action Plan.

- 6.2 Such plans set out the implementation strategies, together with details of personnel, timescales and resources required to deliver the desired outcomes. Importantly, the plan also sets out the anticipated impact on children and young people's learning, achievement and attainment and how this will be monitored and evaluated.

- 6.3 The school works with officers of the authority in implementing the improvement plan and Quality Improvement Officers monitor and evaluated the extent to which the school has overtaken the areas for improvement. This results in the production of the follow-through report either for moderation by HMIE or for direct communication to staff, pupils and parents.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Nil

8. POLICY/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

NIL

9. COMMUNITY PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

The performance of early years centres and schools in East Ayrshire are an indication of the extent to which Educational Services contribute to the themes of Promoting Community Learning and Improving Opportunities.

10. RISK IMPLICATIONS

Nil

11. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Members:

- (i) note the overall strong performance of early years centres and schools in East Ayrshire;
- (ii) invite the Executive Director to provide similar reports on performance on an annual basis;
- (iii) otherwise note the contents of this report.

Graham R Short
Executive Director of Educational and Social Services
1 December 2009

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

Copies of all HM Inspectors of Schools and Care Commission Inspection Reports are available on www.hmie.gov.uk and www.carecommission.com

Members requiring further information should contact Graham Short, Executive Director of Educational and Social Services, Tel: (01563) 576017 or Andrew Sutherland, Head of Service: Schools Tel: (01563) 576126.

IMPLEMENTATION OFFICER

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