

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

GOVERNANCE AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 9th OCTOBER 2020

Report by the Depute Chief Executive and Chief Financial Officer: Economy and Skills

FENWICK PRIMARY SCHOOL HMle INSPECTION REPORT

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. This report presents the findings of a report by Education Scotland: Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMle) following their inspection of Fenwick Primary School.

RECOMMENDATIONS

2. It is recommended that the Governance and Scrutiny Committee:
 - (i) Notes the publication of the HMle Inspection Report for Fenwick Primary School;
 - (ii) Congratulate the children/young people and staff on their achievements;
 - (iii) Notes the next steps, and;
 - (iv) Otherwise notes the contents of the report.

BACKGROUND

AIMS OF INSPECTION

3. The powers of Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education (HMIE) to inspect education establishments and services for children are set out in the Education (Scotland) Act 1980, section 66. HMIE is an Executive Agency of the Scottish Government. As an Inspectorate, it contributes towards achieving the Government's overall purpose and its strategic objectives of creating a smarter, healthier, wealthier and fairer, greener and safer and stronger Scotland.
4. Inspections and reviews are designed 'to improve outcomes for all Scotland's learners'. This is achieved through:
 - Providing independent assurance and accountability to the users of education services regarding the quality of provision and outcomes achieved;
 - Providing a solid base of evidence drawn from professional evaluations of 'front line' practice' to inform national policy development on education and children's issues; and the
 - Promotion and adoption of effective practice and assisting providers to increase their capability to self-evaluate and drive their own improvement.

5. Each year HMIE inspect and report on the quality of education in a sample of primary schools, secondary schools, special schools, community learning and development services, colleges and residential educational provision. In addition, shared inspections are undertaken jointly by HMIE and the Care Inspectorate in a sample of early learning and childcare settings.
6. Through its inspections, HMIE aims to provide assurance to stakeholders. It also aims to promote improvement and successful innovation to enhance learners' experiences and achievements. Inspections also contribute to National Performance Framework (NPF) reporting.
7. From August 2016, a range of new inspection models were introduced to suit particular circumstances and contexts. This enables inspectors to respond with greater agility and flexibility as key educational policies and priorities develop. The HMIE inspection models which focus on Early Childhood Centres and Schools are:
 - Full inspection model, which focuses on 4 Quality Indicators.
 - Short inspection model, which focuses on 2 Quality Indicators.
8. These inspection models use the Quality Indicators included in How Good is Our School? (4th edition) (HGIOS4) which was published in September 2015 and How Good is our Early Learning and Childcare (HGIOELC) which was published in February 2016. It is expected that schools are already using these indicators for self-evaluation and planning for improvement. The HGIOS4 and HGIOELC Quality Indicators to be evaluated on the six-point scale in full school inspections have been re-focused to align with the new National Improvement Framework developed with Scottish Government, partners and stakeholders across the education system.

The QIs evaluated in full inspections are:

- 1.3 Leadership of Change.
- 2.3 Learning, Teaching and Assessment.
- 3.2 Raising Attainment and Achievement (called Securing Children's Progress in Early Years).
- 3.1 Ensuring Wellbeing, Equality and Inclusion.

The QIs evaluated in short model inspections are:

- 2.3 Learning, Teaching and Assessment.
- 3.2 Raising Attainment and Achievement (called Securing Children's Progress in Early Years).

These Quality Indicators are evaluated using a six point scale; *excellent, very good, good, satisfactory, weak and unsatisfactory*. The first three of these QIs will feed directly into the evidence base for the National Improvement Framework. In addition, inspections will incorporate themes from other QIs to

ensure evidence continues to be captured to promote improvement and provide evidence to inform national policy development.

INSPECTION PROCESS

9. Inspections are carried out by a team of Inspectors, Associate Assessors (AA), a Lay Member (LM) working for Education Scotland and where there is an early years setting, an inspector from the Care Inspectorate will be part of the team. In very small schools, one HMI will inspect the school. Schools and early childhood centres are notified three weeks before the inspection is due to take place.
10. Inspectors will undertake a range of activities over the course of the inspection. The programme of activities will be informed by the “areas for focused attention”. It involves class visits (including the nursery class or early childhood centre where there is one), meetings with staff and children, and reading key documentation. Some members of the team, such as the Lay Member and Health and Nutrition Inspector are in the school at different times in the course of the week.
11. Inspectors also take the opportunity to speak to Parent Council Chairperson, parents and staff as a follow up to the questionnaires that are distributed before the inspection. At the end of the inspection, inspectors meet with the Head Teacher (and Senior Management Team where there is one) and a representative from the Local Authority to share their findings using the three key questions listed above as the basis for dialogue. They share their evaluations of the four quality indicators.
12. Following the inspection, a letter for parents is published on the Education Scotland website and the Care Inspectorate website where there is an early years setting and sent electronically to the education authority and the chairperson of the Parent Council. Where necessary, the school and early childhood centre, with support from the education authority will amend its improvement plan to bring about improvements that the letter says is needed. In some cases HMIE will carry out a continued engagement visit to support staff in making improvements or gather information about good practice.

CARE INSPECTORATE

13. In some inspections, HMIE are joined by colleagues from the Care Inspectorate who also provide Quality Grade evaluations in the Early Childhood Centre. The Quality Grade evaluations are provided for Care and Support, Environment, Staffing and Management & Leadership.

FENWICK PRIMARY SCHOOL FOLLOW UP INSPECTION

14. Fenwick Primary School was initially inspected in May 2017. Following the initial inspection, a continuing engagement visit took place in June 2018. Inspectors assessed that the school had clearly made progress since the

original inspection, however, they would return to carry out a further inspection of the school within 18 months. A further continuing engagement inspection took place in February 2020. Inspectors focused on the progress being made in the school in four key areas: in order to raise attainment and achievement for all, the school should use its three-year strategic plan to improve all areas of the curriculum; develop staff's skills in tracking and monitoring of children's progress, making effective use of all relevant data; improve learning, teaching and assessment as a priority, ensuring an appropriate level of pace and challenge for all; develop leadership across the school, particularly through the roles of class teachers and the contribution of children.

IN ORDER TO RAISE ATTAINMENT AND ACHIEVEMENT FOR ALL, THE SCHOOL SHOULD USE ITS THREE-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN TO IMPROVE ALL AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM

15. Inspectors commented that senior leaders, working with staff, have raised attainment in literacy and numeracy across the school. They have made increasingly effective use of strategic planning to continue to improve all areas of the curriculum. Overall, this has resulted in positive progress in this area for improvement.

The new headteacher has established a range of positive relationships and practices to foster better self-evaluation at every level in the school. She is focused appropriately upon raising attainment and achievement for all children, and is receptive to the advice and suggestions of others. The principal teacher has played a key role in sustaining momentum over the period of changes in the school, providing staff with much appreciated support.

Senior leaders and staff have worked well together to continue to improve and develop the curriculum. They have introduced successfully, suitable programmes across all areas of the curriculum. Children told us about the improvements to their learning. As a result, they are experiencing a broader range of subjects and topics. They now make better progress in their learning.

Senior leaders and staff use collegiate meetings and working parties well to continue to develop the curriculum, in order to improve outcomes for children. Staff should now ensure there is a clear overview of the curriculum so there is no unnecessary repetition or gaps in children's learning.

As a next step, the senior leadership team, together with staff, should evaluate and monitor the impact of the curriculum pathways to ensure these support children effectively to develop their skills and knowledge across the curriculum. They should improve assessment approaches, in order to raise further children's attainment and achievement across all stages and curricular areas.

DEVELOP STAFF'S SKILLS IN TRACKING AND MONITORING OF CHILDREN'S PROGRESS, MAKING EFFECTIVE USE OF ALL RELEVANT DATA.

16. Senior leaders have worked well with staff to ensure that there are more robust systems in place for tracking and monitoring children's progress in literacy and numeracy. Senior leaders now use data from a range of sources to ensure children's learning needs in literacy and numeracy are being met better by class teachers. The senior leadership team and education authority provide improved support for class teachers to develop their skills in analysing performance data.

Teaching staff are implementing target setting more consistently across the school, which is helping to engage children more in providing robust evidence of their learning. As a result, children now have a better understanding of what they need to do to improve, and are beginning to evaluate their own progress. Across the school, most children are on track to achieve in line with national expectations in literacy and numeracy.

Teachers are beginning to make more effective use of assessment information to plan learning and teaching in literacy and numeracy. They are starting to use tracking systems well to track and monitor individual children's progress to inform their next steps in learning. Staff are providing more helpful, accurate and meaningful feedback to children about their progress, for example in jotters and through learning conversations.

Senior leaders and teachers need to develop a robust framework for assessing children's work and use this to inform the planning of learning and teaching. Whilst teachers gather assessment information in literacy and numeracy, they are aware of the need to develop and gather clear information on children's progress and attainment across all curricular areas.

IMPROVE LEARNING, TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT AS A PRIORITY, ENSURING AN APPROPRIATE LEVEL OF PACE AND CHALLENGE FOR ALL.

17. Senior leaders and staff have continued to seek improvements in learning, teaching and assessment. Overall, these approaches have had a positive influence on the quality of children's learning.

With the local authority's support, senior leaders have invested significantly in professional learning for staff. This has had a positive influence on the quality of teaching and children's learning, at a time when there have been large scale changes in staffing.

Almost all children are interested in, and motivated by, the tasks they are given. Almost all respond well to the learning approaches which teachers promote, involving a balance of individual, group and whole class work.

Senior leaders' and teachers' approaches to observing colleagues' lessons have resulted in improved quality assurance, and stronger sharing of effective practice in learning and teaching. Staff continue to improve their skills and confidence in assessing children's progress, for example to confirm when children have achieved in line with national expectations.

The ongoing work of senior leaders and teachers to improve learning, teaching and assessment provides a sound basis for further, necessary improvements. Teachers' approaches to planning and teaching should be developed further to ensure all learning is appropriately challenging and meets the needs of all children. In addition, senior leaders and teachers should maintain their focus on improving their understanding of standards in children's achievements, and how they assess and track children's progress. This will ensure teachers' assessments of children's progress are increasingly more reliable and robust.

Senior leaders, with staff, need to continue to address areas for improvement and share good practice in learning, teaching and assessment.

DEVELOP LEADERSHIP ACROSS THE SCHOOL, PARTICULARLY THROUGH THE ROLES OF CLASS TEACHERS AND THE CONTRIBUTION OF CHILDREN.

18. The new headteacher recognises the importance of using every resource available to the school. This includes engaging with all stakeholders to lead improvements in children's experiences and achievements. The new headteacher has shown good judgement in evaluating the school's strengths and development needs, and in giving clear priority to improving outcomes for children.

The principal teacher contributes to the leadership of the school, and develops key aspects of the school's work. Staff all contribute, through a range of important coordinator and leadership roles, to aspects of the curriculum and wider life of the school. As a next step, senior leaders, working with staff, should ensure that these remits focus clearly on and lead to required improvements in raising attainment and improving the quality of learning and teaching.

Children continue to have a variety of valuable opportunities to take on duties and responsibilities across the school, developing their skills as effective contributors and active citizens. All children take part in one or more of the school's committees. Through these experiences, children enhance their capacity to make worthwhile contributions and take leadership roles. These skills equip children well to lead appropriate aspects of learning in all areas of the curriculum. Senior leaders, with staff, should now develop more opportunities for all children to develop their skills for learning, life and work.

Education Scotland are confident that the school has the capacity to continue to improve. Inspectors will join East Ayrshire Council officers in a review of the school's progress within 12 months.

19. Areas for improvement are being addressed in the following ways:

- Continue to focus on learning, teaching and assessment in Literacy, Numeracy and Health and Wellbeing; working collaboratively to create a robust framework for assessment. Begin to gather assessment information and information about children's progress across all curricular areas.
- Continue to track pupil progress through tracking and monitoring procedures already in place. Ensure all staff are confident in assessing pupils' progress through moderation activities.
- Continue to evaluate the quality of lessons through quality assurance procedures, with a focus on appropriate levels of differentiation and challenge to meet all pupils' needs better.
- Further develop opportunities for all pupils to develop their skills for learning, life and work, with a particular focus on digital literacy and STEM.
- Continue to empower teachers to lead key areas of the school improvement plan, encouraging them to engage positively with professional learning and take the lead role in driving forward improvements within the school, which will have a positive impact on raising attainment and improving the quality of teaching and learning.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 20.** Any additional support will be provided through existing budget provision.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 21.** There are no legal implications arising from this report.

RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 22.** There are no risk implications arising from this report.

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 23.** No negative impact.

COMMUNITY PLANNING/POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 24.** There are no planning and policy implications.

TRANSFORMATION STRATEGY

- 25.** There are no implications arising from this report.

Background Papers: Full details of the inspections team's finding are available on the Education Scotland website on the following pages:

<https://education.gov.scot/education-scotland/inspection-reports/reports-page/?id=2567>

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