

Inspection of Sacred Heart Primary School

Report by Michelle Strong, Chief Education Operating Officer, Children, Young People and Partnerships.

1 Purpose of Report

The report outlines the outcome of the above inspection as carried out by Education Scotland which was communicated in their letter of May 2023.

2 Background

2.1 In February 2023, a team of inspectors from Education Scotland visited Sacred Heart Primary School. The report was published on 9 May 2023, and is available on the Education Scotland website at <https://education.gov.scot/education-scotland/inspection-reports/reports-page/?id=4266>

2.2 Education Scotland is responsible for inspecting education settings throughout Scotland. They do so using core quality indicators;

- QI 1.3 Leadership of Change
- QI 2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment
- QI 3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion
- QI 3.2 Raising attainment and achievement

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

Confident and articulate children across the school and provision who are enthusiastic. Steps taken by the acting headteacher to refocus the work of the school on raising attainment and improving learning and teaching.

Children who behave well and are pleasant, articulate and keen to learn. They respond well to the Sacred Heart awards at assembly.

The nurturing approach of practitioners in the nursery. The nursery team support children to feel secure, confident and increasingly independent in their learning.

2.4 The following areas for improvement were identified and discussed with the acting headteacher and a representative from Midlothian Council.

Staff should work together to ensure all children experience high quality learning and teaching. In doing so, staff should improve the planning of learning, teaching and assessment and ensure all children receive their entitlement to a broad curriculum.

Teachers should continue to work together to raise attainment. They should increase their understanding of national expectations about what children can achieve across all areas of the curriculum.

Staff should improve approaches to how they monitor children's progress in learning. They should use information on children's progress more effectively to raise attainment and improve how children's needs are met across the school and nursery.

Staff should improve the quality of learning through play across the early level.

2.5 Conclusion

As a result of the inspection findings Education Scotland thinks that the school needs additional support and more time to make necessary improvements. They will liaise with Midlothian Council regarding the school's capacity to improve and will return to carry out a further inspection of the school within one year of the publication of the inspection letter.

3 Report Implications

3.1 Resource

There are no financial and human resource implications associated with this report.

3.2 Risk

Education Scotland's team of Inspectors visit a sample of education settings every year to find out how they are performing. A report is published which informs parents about the key strengths of the setting and its capacity for further improvement.

Following the publication of the report further visits may be made to the setting, by the Education Authority to assist improvement and monitor progress.

Monitoring, review and evaluation of progress by central officers in the Education Team is the control measure in place to reduce the risk of failure of settings to demonstrate their capacity to improve.

3.3 Single Midlothian Plan and Business Transformation

Themes addressed in this report:

- Community safety
- Adult health, care and housing
- Getting it right for every Midlothian child
- Improving opportunities in Midlothian
- Sustainable growth
- Business transformation and Best Value
- None of the above

3.4 Impact on Performance and Outcomes

The setting will continue to improve its work in line with the school improvement plan and central officers in the Education Team will continue to challenge and support the setting in relation to developing and implementing a range of quality improvement strategies.

3.5 Adopting a Preventative Approach

The Education (Scotland) Bill aims to take preventative action in order to close the attainment versus deprivation gap by implementing key policies and programmes which are designed to target support to children and young people from disadvantaged communities. Midlothian is highly committed to closing the poverty related attainment gap.

3.6 Involving Communities and Other Stakeholders

A link to the published report has been made available to Elected Members, parents of children currently attending Danderhall Primary School and other interested parties.

3.7 Ensuring Equalities

The School Improvement Plan will be screened for equalities implications.

3.8 Supporting Sustainable Development

The School Improvement Plan allows for sustainable development and improvement.

3.9 IT Issues

There are no IT implications.

4 Recommendations

Performance Review and Scrutiny is asked to:

- (i) Note the content of the inspection report.

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Background Papers:

Inspection Report (attached).