

Follow up Inspection of Burnbrae 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 in January 2023.

2 Background

2.1 In March 2020, HM Inspectors published a letter on Burnbrae Primary School and Nursery Class. The letter set out a number of areas for improvement which were agreed with the school and Midlothian Council. HM Inspectors returned to the school to look at how it had continued to improve its work, and published another letter in February 2022. In January 2023 HM Inspectors visited the school again. The report is now published on the Education Scotland website and is available from this [link](#).

2.2 Education Scotland is responsible for inspecting education settings throughout Scotland. As this was a follow up inspection the focus was on areas for development from the original inspection.

- **Improve strategic leadership of quality improvement across the school. Ensure systems for tracking and monitoring children's progress lead to a shared understanding of standards and ultimately raised attainment.**
- **Improve consistency in the quality of learning and teaching. Develop a framework for assessment and use assessment information to inform planning for learning to ensure children's progress.**

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

The headteacher has had a relentless focus on improvement. Supported well by the deputy headteachers and principal teachers, she is developing a culture of learning across the whole school. Together, senior leaders now provide much clearer strategic leadership and direction to support school improvement. In doing so, the senior leadership team have established clear expectations for all staff.

The headteacher is working with local authority representatives to develop and pilot a system to track and monitor children's progress in learning.

In most classes across the nursery and school, children experience positive relationships with staff and peers. Staff should continue to embed nurturing approaches across all areas of the school. Senior leaders and staff have developed a relationships policy that outlines their expectations for children across the school.

Teachers have taken positive steps to develop the Burnbrae learning, teaching and assessment policy. This sets out clear, shared expectations about the key features of quality learning and teaching.

Senior leaders have worked well to ensure that a whole-school assessment strategy is now in place. Staff gather assessment information which helps to identify children who may require additional support or challenge in their learning.

Across both the social and complex needs (SCN) provision and the complex needs (CN) provision, staff work well together to meet the needs of most children. Effective leadership supports staff to provide appropriate learning activities that are largely based around developing children's skills for life.

Children in the SCN and CN provisions learn in an appropriate range of environments, both inside and out, including visits to local amenities to enrich their experiences.

Staff in the nursery continue to make considerable progress since the original inspection. Across the nursery, almost all children are engaged and interested in learning. They enjoy positive and respectful relationships with other children and adults. Overall, practitioners use skilful questioning to enrich and extend children's learning. There is a strong sense of teamwork across the whole nursery setting.

Practitioners in the nursery have improved how they plan and assess children's learning. Planning approaches take good account of children's needs and particular interests. Practitioners make good use of digital tools to record children's achievements.

Over the last session, staff at P1 have collaborated well with colleagues from the nursery to improve interactions, experiences and spaces in the P1 classes. Helpfully, members of the nursery staff team work closely with P1 classes to provide ongoing support for children and reciprocal learning opportunities.

2.4 The following areas for improvement were identified and the local authority will provide a report on progress within one year of this inspection.

Senior leaders now need to work with staff to ensure all teachers carry out their responsibilities in line with expected national standards. It is now important for all staff to work together, taking a more active role in delivering school improvement priorities. This will help to achieve long term, sustainable change and improved outcomes for children.

The headteacher and senior leaders should continue to work closely with the whole school community to secure continuous improvement. In doing so, senior leaders will communicate effectively the work of the school, engaging all stakeholders in a variety of ways. They will ensure successes are celebrated more widely.

Senior leaders should continue to monitor children's progress closely to ensure that new approaches to planning and assessment have a positive impact on children's attainment. Senior leaders need to ensure that all teachers maximise opportunities to plan together, with a focus on improving further the experiences and outcomes of all children. Teachers need to continue to develop their use of assessment information to plan learning experiences which provide an appropriate level of challenge for all children and support them to make the best possible progress.

Staff in the social and complex needs (SCN) provision and the complex needs (CN) provision need to develop children's literacy and numeracy skills in real life contexts.

In the nursery there is scope for the team to develop further ways in which practitioners share practice with each other to secure greater consistency in high quality learning across the setting. As planned, staff now need to work with colleagues at P2 and beyond to ensure children build on their very positive experiences at the early level.

2.5 Conclusion

The school has made progress since the original inspection, especially to practice in the provision classes, across early years and in P1. The local authority will now provide a report on progress within one year of this inspection. This report will inform any decision made by Education Scotland regarding further engagement.

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

Cabinet is asked to:

- (i) Note the content of the inspection follow through report.
- (ii) Pass this report to the Performance, Review and Scrutiny Committee for its consideration.
- (iii) Congratulate the pupils, parents and staff connected with Burnbrae Primary School on the key strengths highlighted in the report.

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Background Papers:

Inspection Report (attached).