
To: Education and Children Policy Board

On: 5 November 2015

Report by: Director of Children's Services

Heading: Education Scotland Inspection of Wallace Primary School
and Nursery Class, Elderslie

1. Summary

- 1.1. Wallace Primary School and nursery class in Elderslie was inspected by Education Scotland, in April 2015, as part of a national sample of primary education. The letter to parents and quality indicator evaluations, published by Education Scotland on 25 August 2015 are attached as appendices to this report. The letter to parents is also available from the director of children's services or from the Education Scotland website www.educationscotland.gov.uk
- 1.2. The purpose of the school inspection was to evaluate the quality of education. Inspectors assessed the school, with a focus on five quality indicators which were: improvements in performance; the quality of learners' experiences; meeting learning needs; the curriculum; and improvement through self-evaluation.
- 1.3. This was a positive inspection by Education Scotland and the letter to parents identified four key strengths of the school. These were:
 - **caring staff and a nurturing ethos led by the headteacher and management team;**
 - **well behaved, confident and motivated children who are keen to learn;**
 - **the school's engagement with parents; and**
 - **strong links with a range of partners and the local community which enhance children's learning.**

- 1.4. The report identified three areas for further improvement. These were:
- continue to develop the curriculum and ensure it meets the learning needs of all children;
 - continue to develop rigorous self-evaluation approaches to ensure continuous improvements in children's experiences and achievements; and
 - improve approaches to meeting children's needs in the nursery, to ensure they make suitable progress.
- 1.5. Education Scotland was confident that the school will be able to make the necessary improvements in light of the inspection findings. As a result, it will make no further visits in connection with this inspection.
- 1.6. Children's services has an agreed set of procedures for responding to inspection reports. The school and the service will prepare an action plan indicating how they will address the points for action in the report, and share this plan with parents. In addition, the school will be supported in its improvement by children's services. Within two years of the publication of the letter to parents children's services will inform parents of the progress made by the school in addressing the main points for action.
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2. Recommendations

- 2.1. Members of the education and children policy board are asked to note the key strengths and the areas for improvement in the Education Scotland report on Wallace Primary School and nursery class.
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3. Background

- 3.1. Education Scotland reports are circulated to the local elected members, staff, parent council members and are made available on-line to the wider parent body. Copies are also sent to local and central libraries.
- 3.2. The report includes three recommendations for improvement. These recommendations will be addressed through an action plan, produced by the school and supported by children's services staff.
- 3.3. Progress on the action plan will be monitored by children's services staff on a proportionate basis. A report will be prepared within two years of the original inspection, detailing the progress made in implementing the action plan. This report will be made available to parents.
- 3.4. Children's services welcomes the process of audit undertaken by Education Scotland as supportive to continuous improvement in Renfrewshire schools. The inspection report will be used by the school and the service in the context of supporting and developing the quality of educational provision.
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Implications of this report

1. Financial Implications

None.

2. HR and Organisational Development Implications

None.

3. Community Plan/Council Plan Implications

Children and Young People

- High standards of education provision ensure that children and young people are given the best start in life so that they promote and contribute to a more prosperous, fairer society.

Community Care, Health and Well-being

- By providing an environment which encourages care, welfare and development, establishments play a crucial role in developing children and young people so that they become responsible citizens. The school and nursery's success in promoting healthy lifestyles is evaluated as part of the quality assurance process.

Empowering our Communities

- High standards of education provision ensure that children and young people are given the best start in life so that they promote and contribute to a more prosperous, fairer society.

Greener

- Participation in the eco-schools programme encourages young people to become environmentally aware.

Jobs and the Economy

- The quality assurance process contributes to our young people becoming successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens.

4. Legal Implications

Standards in Scotland's Schools etc Act 2000.

5. Property/Assets Implications

None.

6. Information Technology Implications

None.

7. Equality and Human Rights Implications

The Recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report because it is for noting only.

8. Health and Safety Implications

None.

9. Procurement Implications

None.

10. Risk Implications

None.

11. Privacy Impact

None.

List of Background Papers

(a) None.

Children's Services

TMcE/AK

6 October 2015

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26 August 2015

Dear Parent/Carer

**Wallace Primary School and Nursery Class
Renfrewshire Council**

Recently, as you may know, my colleagues and I inspected your child's school. During our visit, we talked to parents and children and worked closely with the headteacher and staff. We wanted to find out how well children are learning and achieving and how well the school supports children to do their best. The headteacher and others shared with us the school's successes and priorities for improvement. We looked at some particular aspects of the school's recent work, including the range of topics that children were studying. As a result, we were able to find out how good the school is at improving children's education.

How well do children learn and achieve?

Across the nursery and primary stages, children are very well behaved, polite and are keen to learn. They are consulted about their learning and can choose aspects and activities to study. They enjoy what they are learning and are very motivated. In the nursery, children participate confidently in discussions with their key worker during small group times. Staff should continue to make the discussions more explicit to help children identify what they need to do to improve further. Across the primary classes, children are actively engaged in a range of activities which increase their knowledge and understanding. They contribute very confidently to lessons and debates, helping each other as well as learning from each other. They enjoy having opportunities to extend their learning and respond positively to challenges. These successful approaches could be developed further across the curriculum. Children work very well with a range of external partners, which is developing their skills for life-long learning and work. Teachers are creative in planning exciting topic work which provides opportunities for children to become independent learners. They use questioning successfully to find out what children know and to challenge them in their thinking. Children play an active part in the school as house captains, buddies, monitors and as members of the Pupil Council. Learning showcases in the nursery and school enable children to share and explain what they have learnt with their families and carers. Feedback from families, carers and children is very positive about this approach.

Across the nursery and the primary stages, children are developing a range of skills which make them more confident and successful. The school celebrates children's achievements very well. In the nursery, children are awarded 'Star of the Week' for being kind, thoughtful and having good manners. At the primary stages, children are awarded rosettes at the monthly 'Red Carpet Assemblies' for achievements both in and out of school. Children participate successfully in a range of musical, artistic and sporting activities, for example, karate, football and electronics. As a result, children's self-esteem and team working skills are developing very well. The school has gained its third Eco Schools Scotland green flag award, Fairtrade awards and

recognition of Rights Respecting School. In the nursery, most children can talk confidently and are developing a range of vocabulary. In numeracy, most children use numbers in play contexts well, with a few using large numbers. There is scope for nursery children to be making better progress in both literacy and numeracy. Across the primary stages, children read well and are reading a variety of books. They write well for a range of purposes. Children use their reading and writing skills successfully during personal research and topic work. In numeracy, children develop their skills effectively through regular mental mathematics and problem-solving exercises. Children's mathematical skills and knowledge are further reinforced in other areas of the curriculum. For both literacy and numeracy, the school should continue to raise attainment.

How well does the school support children to develop and learn?

There is a nurturing ethos in the nursery and primary classes with staff providing a high level of pastoral care, support and encouragement. At times, tasks and activities in the nursery can be too adult-led. Children need to be more independent in and lead their own learning. They should also be challenged more in their learning. At the primary stages, some tasks and activities could be matched more closely to children's learning needs. At times, children could be given more demanding tasks that challenge them further. Children with additional learning needs are supported very well and have detailed written plans in place. Parents are involved in the formation of these plans which are regularly reviewed and updated to ensure children make suitable progress. The school has strong links with partner agencies and services that provide a wide range of support for children and their parents. For example, the school uses funding from partners very well to support the most vulnerable children.

Across the nursery and primary stages, staff have worked hard to develop the curriculum. In the nursery, the management recognise the need to support staff to provide a curriculum which ensures children can achieve as highly as possible. At the primary stages, teachers use the Curriculum for Excellence advice effectively to plan lessons and activities. They work very well together to provide a variety of exciting topics which challenge children in their thinking. As a result, children are receiving a broad and balanced curriculum. The school has plans to develop areas of the curriculum such as art and music. Teachers at the upper primary stages have developed many curricular links with Castlehead High School to ensure children can build on their learning when they enter S1.

How well does the school improve the quality of its work?

The headteacher promotes a caring environment for children to achieve and succeed. The deputy headteachers support the headteacher very effectively. As a management team, they are strongly committed to improving the quality of children's learning experiences. The headteacher carries out lesson observations and provides staff with helpful comments. Staff are leading on different areas of school improvements, such as taking responsibility for developing aspects of the curriculum. Staff should share good practice more formally to ensure that they continue to provide high-quality learning for all children. They are making suitable progress in developing more rigorous approaches to monitoring and tracking children's progress to ensure they attain as highly as possible. The headteacher asks parents for their views on how the school can be improved and their suggestions contribute to the school improvement plans. The headteacher responds to other identified aspects and acts upon them accordingly.

During the previous Care Inspectorate inspection, the nursery had no requirements and three recommendations. As a result of this inspection, there are no requirements and five recommendations.

This inspection found the following key strengths.

- Caring staff and a nurturing ethos led by the headteacher and management team.
- Well behaved, confident and motivated children who are keen to learn.
- The school's engagement with parents.
- Strong links with a range of partners and the local community which enhance children's learning.

We discussed with staff and Renfrewshire Council how they might continue to improve the school and nursery class. This is what we agreed with them.

- Continue to develop the curriculum and ensure it meets the learning needs of all children.
- Continue to develop rigorous self-evaluation approaches to ensure continuous improvements in children's experiences and achievements.
- Improve approaches to meeting children's needs in the nursery, to ensure they make suitable progress.

What happens at the end of the inspection?

We are satisfied with the overall quality of provision. We are confident that the school's self-evaluation processes are leading to improvements. As a result, we will make no further visits in connection with this inspection. As part of its arrangements for reporting to parents on the quality of education, Renfrewshire Council will inform parents about the school's progress.

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Quality indicators help schools, education authorities and inspectors to judge what is good and what needs to be improved in the work of the school. You can find these quality indicators in the publication *How good is our school?*¹. Following the inspection of each school, the Scottish Government gathers evaluations of three important quality indicators to keep track of how well all Scottish schools are doing.

Here are the evaluations for **Wallace Primary School**.

Improvements in performance	good
Learners' experiences	very good
Meeting learning needs	good

Nursery Class

Improvements in performance	satisfactory
Childrens' experiences	good
Meeting learning needs	satisfactory

We also evaluated the following aspects of the work of the school.

The curriculum	good
Improvement through self-evaluation	good

Here are the Care Inspectorate's gradings for the nursery class.

Quality of care and support	good
Quality of environment	adequate
Quality of staffing	good
Quality of management and leadership	adequate