



To: Education Policy Board

On: 15 January 2015

Report by: Director of Education and Leisure Services

Heading: Education Scotland Inspection of Arkleston Primary School, Renfrew

1. Summary

- 1.1. Arkleston Primary School in Renfrew was inspected by Education Scotland, in October 2014, as part of a national sample of primary education. The letter to parents and quality indicator evaluations, published by Education Scotland on 16 December 2014 are attached as appendices to this report. The letter to parents is also available from the director of education and leisure 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:
 - well-motivated children who are engaged in their learning;
 - children's achievements in a wide range of activities;
 - motivated staff who are working with senior managers to continue to improve the school; and
 - the strong leadership of the headteacher in managing change.
- 1.4. The report identified four areas for further improvement. These were to:
 - continue to develop the curriculum, ensuring depth and challenge in children's learning;
 - build on the self-evaluation approaches to ensure continuous improvement in children's learning;
 - ensure that children's learning needs are met in all classes; and
 - continue to develop approaches to assessing and tracking children's 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. Education and leisure 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 quarterly monitoring visits by the link education officer. Within two years of the publication of the report education and leisure 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 policy board are asked to note the key strengths and the areas for improvement in the Education Scotland report on Arkleston Primary School.
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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 four recommendations for improvement. These recommendations will be addressed through an action plan, produced by the school and supported by education and leisure services staff.
 - 3.3. Progress on the action plan will be monitored by education and leisure 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. Education and leisure 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.

Education and Leisure Services

TMcE/AK

3 December 2014

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16 December 2014

Dear Parent/Carer

**Arkleston Primary School
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 shared with us the school's successes and priorities for improvement. We looked at some particular aspects of the school's recent work, including developing staff leadership at all levels, revised procedures for planning learning, and celebrating achievement across the school. As a result, we were able to find out how good the school is at improving children's education. Prior to the headteacher taking up post, there have been several changes to the leadership of the school, including acting headteacher arrangements.

How well do children learn and achieve?

Overall, children learn and achieve well at Arkleston Primary School. They are polite, respectful and supportive of each other in classes and around the school. Children welcome visitors to their school, and this was most evident at the open afternoon for parents where children shared their learning experiences. Staff have worked hard to provide ways for children to learn through practical activities. This is helping children to learn in more meaningful ways. Teachers should build on this good start and continue to find ways to develop children's skills in analysing, evaluating and problem-solving. Almost all teachers share with children what they want them to learn. The school is working on improving children's awareness of their skills, progress and next steps as learners. More specific feedback will assist children in making more effective progress in their learning. The recently introduced electronic behaviour recording system in P5-7 is recognising and rewarding children who work well together. The school should continue to focus on ensuring that children's learning experiences are of a consistently high standard in all classes. Children play an active part in school life and feel that their views are listened to by staff through their positions of responsibility as house captains, buddies, members of the Eco Committee and Rights Respecting School. Across the school, celebration of achievement is strong. Children's achievements are recognised and praised, for example through *Arky Stars*. They are actively involved and achieve success in a range of sporting, cultural, and community events. For example, they support Renfrew Care Home as part of their enterprise work to develop inter-generational links. The school should further embed the recently introduced language of character

strengths so that children can identify and recognise the skills and attributes they gain from taking part in the wide range of activities available in and out of school. Most children are making satisfactory progress in mathematics and numeracy and good progress in English and literacy. Recent changes to the teaching of reading and writing are helping to improve the way children learn in these areas. Teachers now have a stronger focus on the direct teaching of specific writing skills and give children clearer guidance about how to improve their work. Whilst these initiatives are still in the early stages, they are leading to signs of improvement to children's attainment. Across the school, there is further scope to develop children's skills of analysis and evaluation in reading. At the early stages, children are confidently using information and communications technology to reinforce their knowledge of number sequences to ten. By P7, children can use appropriate mathematical formulae to find the area of simple two-dimensional shapes and are able to solve equivalent fractions. Further opportunities to apply their numeracy skills in real-life contexts and to solve mathematical problems will ensure children learn how to use a wide range of strategies when solving problems. Children across the school are able to demonstrate and discuss the progress they are making in relation to most aspects of health and wellbeing, for example in the work towards becoming a Rights Respecting School.

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

Staff provide a positive climate which builds children's self-esteem. Relationships between teachers and children are respectful. Children also support each other well and there is a positive ethos in the school. This is particularly noticeable in the way older children work with younger children through buddying and play leaders. In a few lessons, children enjoy well-paced and appropriately challenging activities. Teachers prepare well for lessons and there is now scope to develop learning tasks and activities to better match children's needs. A brisker pace in lessons will help to create more challenge for all children. The school should build on examples of good practice such as the positive early signs of increased pace of learning at the early level. The school recognises that it needs to improve the ways it supports children requiring additional support to ensure they make the required progress. This will be supported by the recently introduced involvement of teachers in setting and reviewing targets for children with additional support needs.

Across the school, staff are now taking more account of Curriculum for Excellence guidance to improve the range and quality of programmes and learning approaches. They are working well with colleagues in their cluster schools to develop the curriculum and share standards, particularly in literacy. As a result, children have improving opportunities to learn actively and influence what they are learning about in their topic work, for example, learning about natural disasters in P7. The school provides children with a broad curriculum and now needs to ensure that children's learning is also deep and challenging. The headteacher recognises the need to improve curriculum progression to ensure that children's learning builds more effectively on their prior knowledge. The school should continue with its plan to increase the pace of its improvements.

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

Parents are regularly consulted through the Parent Council and at school events, and their comments are used to improve the school. The headteacher displays strong leadership and has the respect of the school community. She has established an agenda for continuous improvement and has developed systems to monitor the work of the school. The headteacher is leading staff in using information from self-evaluation activities to improve learning, teaching and outcomes for children. The school needs to gather more robust data about children's performance over time and continue to focus on the tracking of pupil progress so that staff know if standards of attainment are improving. The school has correctly identified where improvements are necessary and has developed a clear plan to ensure these improvements are made. The headteacher has managed change very effectively involving staff, children, parents and partners in creating a shared vision for Arkleston Primary. Teachers are beginning to reflect on their own practice and are committed to working together to help ensure consistently high-quality learning across the school and to enable children to make more effective progress.

This inspection found the following key strengths:

- Well-motivated children who are engaged in their learning.
- Children's achievements in a wide range of activities.
- Motivated staff who are working with senior managers to continue to improve the school.
- The strong leadership of the headteacher in managing change.

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

- Continue to develop the curriculum, ensuring depth and challenge in children's learning.
- Build on the self-evaluation approaches to ensure continuous improvement in children's learning.
- Ensure that children's learning needs are met in all classes.
- Continue to develop approaches to assessing and tracking children's 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 pre-school centres, education authorities and inspectors to judge what is good and what needs to be improved in the work of the pre-school centre. You can find these quality indicators in the publication *Child at the Centre*(2)1. Following our inspection of each pre-school centre, the Scottish Government gathers evaluations of three important quality indicators to keep track of how well all Scottish pre-school centres are doing.

The Care Inspectorate publishes quality grades to better inform people and the Scottish Government about the quality of care services. Awarding grades at inspections is aimed at encouraging providers to identify and address areas for improvement. The Care Inspectorate also uses the grades to ensure our inspection activity is targeted and proportionate. The grades at inspection are awarded against four quality themes, details of which can be found on the Care Inspectorate website.

Here are the evaluations for **Arkleston Primary School**

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

We also evaluated the following aspects of work of the pre-school centre

The curriculum	satisfactory
Improvement through self-evaluation	good