

REPORT TO: SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 26 APRIL 2023

REPORT ON: EDUCATION SCOTLAND (HMI) INSPECTION OF VICTORIA PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL

REPORT BY: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SERVICE

REPORT NO: 132- 2023

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 The purpose of this paper is to report on the findings of the Education Scotland (HMI) inspection of Victoria Park Primary School.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 It is recommended that the Scrutiny Committee:

- i) notes the contents of this report; and
- ii) instructs the Chief Education Officer to monitor progress towards meeting the areas for improvement outlined in the report.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 None.

4.0 MAIN TEXT

4.1 Victoria Park Primary School was inspected by Education Scotland (HMI) in November 2023. Education Scotland published a report of the findings on 7 February 2023.

4.2 The school's current Head Teacher has been in post since April 2018 and there is a Depute Head Teacher. At the time of the inspection 205 children were on the primary school roll. 31% of the pupils reside in Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) 1 and 2 and 27% of the school's pupil roll registered for free school meals. The school embraces its rich, multi-cultural community where over 19 languages are spoken.

The school has benefited from our local authority approaches to school improvement. Through the work of the Scottish Attainment Challenge in Dundee, the school has worked collaboratively with the pedagogy team and council officers. This has supported the school's successful improvement journey.

4.3 The inspection team found the following strengths in the school's work:

- Kind and respectful children who learn and play together in a highly inclusive school, where everyone is valued.
- The highly effective leadership of the headteacher. She leads a dedicated team of teachers and support staff who engage regularly in a range of professional learning activities. This is improving children's experiences, learning and achievements.
- Children across the school are making very good progress in English language, literacy and numeracy and mathematics. Children learning English as an additional language make strong progress in developing English vocabulary
- The strong approach to ensuring all children participate in learning and achieve success. This includes removing any barriers to learning and ensuring everyone who needs help can access appropriate support. Children and families who are newly arrived in Scotland are very well supported.

- 4.4 The following areas for improvement were identified and discussed with the Head Teacher and a representative from Dundee City Council:
- Continue to improve approaches to learning, teaching and assessment. This should include developing opportunities for children to become more independent and creative in their learning
 - As planned, review and refresh the curriculum to offer children a wider range of relevant learning experiences in the classroom and the wider community.

4.5 Education Scotland (HMI) reports using a six-point scale for reporting performance:

excellent	outstanding, sector leading
very good	major strengths
good	important strengths with some areas for improvement
satisfactory	strengths just outweigh weaknesses
weak	important weaknesses
unsatisfactory	major weaknesses

4.6 The following quality evaluations were given at this inspection:

Quality Indicator	Victoria Park Primary School
1.3 Leadership of change	Very Good
2.3 Learning, teaching, and assessment	Good
3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and Inclusion	Good
3.2 Raising attainment and achievement	Very Good

4.7 Education Scotland is confident that the school has the capacity to continue to improve and so we will make no more visits in connection with this inspection. Dundee City Council will inform parents and carers about the school's progress through Victoria Park Primary's annual School Improvement Report.

4.8 The Education Manager and the school's link Education Officer will continue to monitor the school's progress and improvement in relation to the identified areas for improvement.

4.9 Victoria Park Primary School's School Improvement Plans (2023/24 and beyond) will include a focus on the identified areas for improvement. These will be regularly reviewed, monitored, and evaluated in line with both the school and the local authority's quality improvement procedures. The attached appendix provides a synopsis of the Summary of Inspection Findings and outlines improvements made in the time to date.

4.10 Planned school improvement activity building on the school's identified strengths and addressing the areas for development include:

- Internal self-evaluation processes
- School Improvement Partnership meetings and reciprocal visits
- Termly visits from link Education Officer
- Professional Support Visits
- Moderation activities

4.11 As part of the Children and Families Service School Improvement Framework, visits are made to the school by the school's link Education Officer to ensure the positive improvement journey continues and monitor the school's progress towards the action points raised in the inspection. The school's Self Evaluation and School Improvement Plans will include the areas for development highlighted by HM Inspectors.

5.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 This report has been subject to the Pre-IIA Screening Tool and does not make any recommendations for change to strategy, policy, procedures, services or funding and so has not been subject to an Integrated Impact Assessment. An appropriate senior manager has reviewed and agreed with this assessment.

6.0 CONSULTATION

- 6.1 The Council Leadership Team, and the school's head teacher, have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 7.1 None.

Audrey May
Executive Director

Paul Fleming
Chief Education Officer

March 2023

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Dundee City Council

Children and Families Service

Scrutiny Committee Report Summary Notes

Inspection and Reporting

Inspection Agency	HMI
Report Publication Date	7 February 2023
Name of Establishment	Victoria Park Primary School
Sector	Primary
Name of Head Teacher	Mrs Lesley-Anne Weir
Roll	205 primary children

Inspection Outcomes 2023

Quality Indicator	Primary Rating
1.3 Leadership of change	Very Good
2.3 Learning, teaching, and assessment	Good
3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and Inclusion	Good
3.2 Raising attainment and achievement	Very Good

The report uses the following word scale:

excellent	outstanding, sector leading
very good	major strengths
good	important strengths with some areas for improvement
satisfactory	strengths just outweigh weaknesses
weak	important weaknesses
unsatisfactory	major weaknesses

Inspection Outcomes February 2023

Key Strengths
Kind and respectful children who learn and play together in a highly inclusive school, where everyone is valued.
The highly effective leadership of the headteacher. She leads a dedicated team of teachers and support staff who engage regularly in a range of professional learning activities. This is improving children's experiences, learning and achievements.
Children across the school are making very good progress in English language, literacy and numeracy and mathematics. Children learning English as an additional language make strong progress in developing English vocabulary
The strong approach to ensuring all children participate in learning and achieve success. This includes removing any barriers to learning and ensuring everyone who needs help can access appropriate support. Children and families who are newly arrived in Scotland are very well supported.

Areas for Improvement
Continue to improve approaches to learning, teaching and assessment. This should include developing opportunities for children to become more independent and creative in their learning.
As planned, review and refresh the curriculum to offer children a wider range of relevant learning experiences in the classroom and the wider community.

Synopsis – Summary of Inspection Findings
Following publication of the inspection report and Summarised Inspection Findings, the school's next Improvement Plan 2022/23 will reflect the recommendations identified by HMI and provide a clear strategic focus for related school improvement.
The Summarised Inspection Findings highlighted the following strengths and areas for improvement within each of the quality indicators.

Leadership of Change - strengths
<p>Victoria Park is an inclusive school where all staff ensure children are happy, safe and learn well. The school's vision values and aims of kindness, respect, effort and learning are evident in the daily life of the school.</p> <p>The very effective headteacher and depute headteacher build on good practice to continue to improve areas of school life and there is a very positive ethos of teamwork. Staff feel valued and empowered.</p> <p>Staff understand the unique, diverse context of the school with effective planning and practices in place to raise the attainment of children who are disadvantaged and to support families who are newly arrived to Scotland. This includes prompt identification of children's learning needs and appropriate steps taken to ensure children make progress in their learning. This is leading to better experiences and outcomes for children and families.</p> <p>Children across the school participate in a range of leadership activities including organizing and leading clubs for their peers.</p>

Learning, teaching and assessment

The refreshed school motto, "With kindness, respect, effort and learning we will learn and grow" underpins the work of the school. In all classes, staff have high expectations of what children can do and achieve. Children learn in calm, structured environments which is supporting improved outcomes. Teachers plan effectively together and senior leaders have recently created a whole school tracking system to monitor children's progress and attainment in for literacy and numeracy.

Staff should continue to support children's understanding of United Nations Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and continue with plans to place children's rights and views at the centre of their learning.

Senior leaders and staff should continue to develop the use of digital technologies and the role of pupil digital leaders.

Teachers should keep approaches to learning and teaching under review to ensure all children are sufficiently challenged.

Ensuring wellbeing, equality and Inclusion

Children treat each other with kindness and respect and learn in an ethos where they feel a strong sense of belonging. Staff model caring, respectful relationships and are responsive to each child's wellbeing. Children feel safe and valued, knowing there are adults in the school whom they can trust and who will listen to them. Staff are developing their understanding of the wellbeing indicators and are building their knowledge of children's rights and how these can be promoted more fully throughout the school.

Partners contribute effectively to the sense of community across the school.

A number of children are developing their confidence acting as school leaders and these roles support them well to develop their sense of responsibility.

The school's zero waste policy has led to the creation of a space in the reception area where parents can share clothes. These uniforms are of a high standard, which protects the dignity of children and adults.

Children for whom English is an additional language are assessed robustly and receive timely interventions, which help them acquire English language quickly.

Staff have established an inclusive culture across the school, where every child's individual differences and beliefs are recognized and celebrated. This supports children to develop their understanding of other cultures and faiths and supports them to be highly inclusive of their peers.

Staff now need to develop further their use of the wellbeing indicators to become integral in all aspects of the school's work. Children should be supported to develop a shared language and knowledge of the wellbeing indicators and develop their understanding of the importance in each one and how it contributes to their overall wellbeing.

Raising attainment and achievement

Attainment in Literacy and Numeracy

Attainment data provided by the school shows that for session 2021-2022, levels of attainment across the school were very good. Most children at P1, P4 and P7 achieved expected levels of attainment in literacy and English and numeracy and mathematics.

Most children with English as an additional language achieve expected levels of attainment in literacy and English and numeracy and mathematics by the end of P7.

Attainment in Literacy and English

Overall, most children make very good progress in literacy and English with a few children working beyond expected levels of attainment. Across all areas of literacy, children would benefit from further opportunities to talk about and recognise the skills they are developing in literacy activities.

Numeracy and Mathematics

Overall, most children make very good progress in numeracy and mathematics with a few children working beyond expected levels of attainment. All children would benefit from further opportunities to apply their mathematical skills across other areas of the curriculum and within new contexts.

Attainment over time

Data about children's levels of achievement for the last five years shows a pattern of high attainment overall. This session, there is a clear focus on raising attainment in literacy for all children. Children receive prompt additional support if required. This is helping them to make very good progress in their planned learning.

Learners' Achievements

Across the school, children have opportunities to participate in a range of pupil leadership groups. These opportunities help children to develop their teamwork and leadership skills well.

Children's achievements in and outside school are recognised and celebrated. They demonstrate kindness and respect to others and can talk about how their achievements are helping them to be more confident. A next step would be for staff to record and monitor children's achievements to ensure no child is at risk of missing out.

Equity for all learners

Staff are successfully removing barriers to learning. They track and record children's progress and use data well to plan interventions and additional support where needed. The headteacher uses Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) to provide additional staff who support children with their attendance. This work is impacting positively on children's attendance, engagement and motivation. Additional staff also support children with targeted interventions in literacy.

Senior leaders adapt enrolment processes for children who are new to Scotland, which is helping children settle in quickly and through appropriate support enable them to access learning independently.

Pupils recycle books and uniforms, demonstrating their citizenship skills effectively

Key activity to date has included the following:

- The Head Teacher led a whole staff development session to ensure full understanding of the inspection findings, including strengths and identified areas for improvement.
- School staff continue with planned improvement activities for the remainder of this school session, as agreed by HM Inspectors. These activities are centred around writing pedagogy and building a positive reading culture, plus working towards a Digital School Award.
- Planning for School Improvement Plan session 2023/24 is underway.
- This will include a full review and refresh of the curriculum offered for Victoria Park learners and will involve gathering views from parents/carers, learners, partner providers and staff. This curriculum review will be supported by and aligned with, the Dundee City Council Curriculum Sketchnote and associated documents.
- A review and refresh of assessment will be included in the 2023/2024 School Improvement Plan. This will be supported by the Dundee City Council Pedagogy team and will include ensuring assessment is an integral part of the planning process, supporting independent and creative learning.

Explanation of terms of quantity:

The following standard Education Scotland terms of quantity are used in this report:

All 100%

Almost all 91%-99%

Most 75%-90%

Majority 50%-74%

Minority/less than half 15%-49%

A few less than 15%

Audrey May
Executive Director

Paul Fleming
Chief Education Officer



7 February 2023

Dear Parent/Carer

In November 2022, a team of inspectors from Education Scotland visited Victoria Park Primary School. During our visit, we talked to parents/carers and children and worked closely with the headteacher and staff.

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

- Kind and respectful children who learn and play together in a highly inclusive school, where everyone is valued.
- The highly effective leadership of the headteacher. She leads a dedicated team of teachers and support staff who engage regularly in a range of professional learning activities. This is improving children's experiences, learning and achievements.
- Children across the school are making very good progress in English language, literacy and numeracy and mathematics. Children learning English as an additional language make strong progress in developing English vocabulary.
- The strong approach to ensuring all children participate in learning and achieve success. This includes removing any barriers to learning and ensuring everyone who needs help can access appropriate support. Children and families who are newly arrived in Scotland are very well supported.

The following areas for improvement were identified and discussed with the headteacher and a representative from Dundee City Council.

- Continue to improve approaches to learning, teaching and assessment. This should include developing opportunities for children to become more independent and creative in their learning.
- As planned, review and refresh the curriculum to offer children a wider range of relevant learning experiences in the classroom and the wider community.

We gathered evidence to enable us to evaluate the school's work using four quality indicators from [How good is our school? \(4th edition\)](#). Quality indicators help schools, local authorities and inspectors to judge what is working well and what needs to be improved. Following the inspection of each school, the Scottish Government gathers details of our evaluations to keep track of how well Scottish schools are doing.

Here are Education Scotland's evaluations for Victoria Park Primary School

Quality indicators	Evaluation
Leadership of change	very good
Learning, teaching and assessment	good
Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion	good
Raising attainment and achievement	very good
Descriptions of the evaluations are available from: How good is our school? (4th edition), Appendix 3: The six-point scale	

A more detailed document called Summarised Inspection Findings (SIF) will be available on the Education Scotland website at:

[Reports page | Inspection reports | Education Scotland](#)

What happens next?

We are confident that the school has the capacity to continue to improve and so we will make no more visits in connection with this inspection. Dundee City Council will inform parents/carers about the school's progress as part of its arrangements for reporting on the quality of its schools.

Susan Duff
HM Inspector