

ITEM No ...3.....

REPORT TO: SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 25 SEPTEMBER 2019

REPORT ON: EDUCATION SCOTLAND (HMI) INSPECTION OF ANCRUM ROAD PRIMARY SCHOOL

REPORT BY: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SERVICE

REPORT NO: 340-2019

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 Ancrum Road 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 Ancrum Road Primary School was inspected by Education Scotland (HMI) in June 2019. They published a report of their findings on 27 August 2019. At the time of the inspection 367 children were on the primary school roll.

4.2 The school's current Head Teacher has been in post since January 2015. 41% of the pupils reside in SIMD 1 and 2 with 54% residing in SIMD 1-3. 13% of the school's pupil roll registered for free school meals.

4.3 The inspection team identified the following key strengths of the school:

- The head teacher's strong leadership and effective approaches to promoting social inclusion and equity of experience for all learners. She works very successfully with a wide range of partners which support children's learning, achievement and wellbeing effectively.
- The very inclusive school ethos which is underpinned by respectful and caring relationships. Children are happy, polite and have a positive attitude to learning.
- Staff's strong sense of teamwork and willingness to take on leadership roles, which is improving children's experiences and outcomes.

4.4 There is a very positive school ethos, which is underpinned by respectful and caring relationships between almost all children and staff, and amongst most children. Most staff encourage children to do the best that they can.

4.5 Across the school, teachers use their classroom environments consistently well to support children's learning. Learning walls are helpful, and children's work is displayed attractively. Teachers use other environments to provide targeted learning experiences and support for a few children, such as the kitchen and snug.

- 4.6 Effective approaches are in place to monitor closely the attainment of children across deciles as a means to identify the poverty related attainment gap in the school. At each stage of the school, there is a clear indication of improving performance of children in SIMD one and two compared to those in deciles three to ten.
- 4.7 The head teacher's commitment to creating a socially inclusive environment, and her strong belief in equity of experience for all learners is a real strength. Over the last three years, there is clear evidence of identified children, who face significant barriers to their learning, making progress to reduce gaps in their attainment and achievement.
- 4.8 Importantly, the inspection team highlighted that the school's partnership with Dundee City Council is providing every child in Primary 5 with the opportunity to learn a musical instrument, and to play in the school orchestra. There are many benefits to this valuable work. Children are developing their ability to cooperate with others, and this is supporting the promotion of positive relationships and behaviour across the school. Children are also developing listening and concentration skills, and improving perseverance and resilience. This is supporting them to make better progress in their learning in class. All children are offered the opportunity to continue to play an instrument in Primary 6. This session there was over 100% increased uptake of this opportunity compared with previous years.
- 4.9 The following areas for improvement were agreed with the school and Dundee City Council:
- Develop a more consistent understanding of what high-quality learning, teaching and assessment looks like in Ancrum Road Primary School. This should draw on strong practice which is evident across the school.
 - Continue to raise attainment over time and close the poverty related attainment gap. This should include a focus on improving the quality of children's writing across the school

4.10 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

4.11 The following quality evaluations were given at this inspection:

Quality Indicator	Ancrum Road Primary School
2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment	Good
3.2 Raising attainment and achievement	Good

4.12 Education Scotland 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 and carers about the school's progress through Ancrum Road's annual School Improvement Report.

4.13 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.

- 4.14 Ancrum Road Primary School's School Improvement Plans (2019/20 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.
- 4.15 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
- 4.16 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 monitor the school's progress towards the action points raised by the inspection. The school's School Improvement Plan (2019/20) clearly articulates the areas for development highlighted by HM Inspectors.

5.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 This Report has been subject to an assessment of any impact on equality and diversity, fairness, poverty, environment and corporate risk. There are no major issues.

6.0 CONSULTATION

- 6.1 The Council Management Team have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 7.1 None.

Paul Clancy
Executive Director of Children and Families Service

Tracey Stewart
Education Officer

September 2019

Dundee City Council
Children and Families Service
Scrutiny Committee Report Summary Notes
Inspection and Reporting

Inspection Agency	HMI
Report Publication Date	27 August 2019
Name of Establishment	Ancrum Road Primary School
Sector	Primary
Name of Head Teacher	Mrs Sharon McQuillan
Roll	367 primary children

Inspection Outcomes June 2019

Quality Indicator	Primary Rating
2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment	Good
3.2 Raising attainment and achievement	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 May 2007

How good are learning, teaching and achievement	Primary Class Rating
Structure of the curriculum	Good
The teaching process	Good
Pupils' learning experiences	Good
Pupils' attainment in English language	Good
Pupils' attainment in mathematics	Adequate

How well are pupils learning needs met?	Primary Rating
Meeting pupils' needs	Adequate

How good is the environment for learning?	Primary Rating
Pastoral care	Very Good
Accommodation and facilities	Adequate
Climate and relationships	Good
Expectations and promoting achievement	Good
Equality and fairness	Good
Partnerships with parents, the School Board and the community	Very Good

Leading and improving the school	Primary Rating
Leadership of the head teacher	Adequate
Leadership across the school	Adequate
Self-evaluation	Weak

The report uses the following word scale:

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

Please note that a revised set of national quality indicators were launched in 2015 with the introduction of How Good is Our School? (4th edition). Caution should be used in making direct comparisons between new quality indicators and 'similar' previous indicators where the focus and weighting of factors has significantly changed e.g. the shift in teaching and learning towards learner autonomy away from teacher behaviours.

During the intervening period between the 2007 and 2019 HMI inspections, the local authority has continued to evaluate the quality of educational provision within the school using the version of How Good Is Our School? in use at the time.

Inspection Outcomes 2019

Key Strengths

The head teacher's strong leadership and effective approaches to promoting social inclusion and equity of experience for all learners. She works very successfully with a wide range of partners which support children's learning, achievement and wellbeing effectively.

The very inclusive school ethos which is underpinned by respectful and caring relationships. Children are happy, polite and have a positive attitude to learning.

Staff's strong sense of teamwork and willingness to take on leadership roles, which is improving children's experiences and outcomes.

Areas for Improvement and Action

Develop a more consistent understanding of what high-quality learning, teaching and assessment looks like in Ancrum Road Primary School. This should draw on strong practice which is evident across the school.

Continue to raise attainment over time and close the poverty related attainment gap. This should include a focus on improving the quality of children's writing across the school.

Synopsis – Summary of Inspection Findings

Following publication of the inspection report and Summarised Inspection Findings, the School's Improvement Plan 2019/20 was amended to reflect the areas for improvement 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.

Learning, teaching and assessment

There is a very positive school ethos, which is underpinned by respectful and caring relationships between almost all children and staff, and amongst most children. Most staff encourage children to do the best that they can. The school's vision, values and aims are evident, in the ways that people relate to one another and on displays throughout the school. Staff refer to the school values regularly during class discussions and assemblies to support children's wellbeing.

Most children enjoy learning at Ancrum Road Primary School. Almost all children have a good attitude to their learning and work purposefully in class. During the inspection, a few children were not engaged fully in their learning, displaying very low-level challenging behaviour. They would have benefited from support to help them to engage.

Most children are able to talk appropriately about their learning. They can articulate what they are good at, and they are beginning to identify accurately their next steps in learning. Most children would benefit from having more defined learning targets across the curriculum. A few children are able to speak very confidently about their learning. Teachers seek children's views about aspects of their learning in most classes. However, they should take increased account of children's views, letting children know that they are doing this, as they continue to develop approaches to improving learning, teaching and assessment across the school.

At all stages, almost all children are able to work at their own pace. This helps them to feel supported in, and motivated by, their learning. Most teachers ensure that all children experience appropriate challenge in their learning. However, this is not yet consistent across the school. A few children would benefit from learning at a faster pace. In a few classes, teachers need to have higher expectations of children's learning and the ways in which they present their work. There is scope for children to learn more independently to build their confidence and sense of responsibility. Most children who require additional support with their learning receive good support in classes from pupil support staff. The head teacher has also developed a wide range of strong partnerships which support children's learning and wellbeing, especially those facing disadvantage.

Most children's learning is enhanced well through the use of digital technologies. Children use laptops and electronic tablets regularly to learn a variety of digital skills, including word-processing and using spreadsheets. In addition they use digital software in classes. This motivates them by helping them to apply their learning in new contexts. It also challenges and deepens their learning. Through volunteering to become 'digital leaders', older children provide useful support to younger children to develop their digital skills.

Almost all teachers give clear explanations to children, and most teachers use questioning well to enhance children's understanding about their learning. In a few classes, teachers need to make better use of questioning to help children explore their thinking more fully. Most teachers use a range of feedback well to support children's learning.

Across the school, teachers use their classroom environments consistently well to support children's learning. Learning walls are helpful, and children's work is displayed attractively. Teachers use other environments to provide targeted learning experiences and support for a few children, such as the kitchen and snug. The kitchen is being used to pilot universal skills in cookery and nutrition, as well as developing communication and teamwork. Teachers also make good use of the outdoors and open spaces to provide valuable learning experiences for children. These are linked to sports and numeracy, and yoga.

Most teachers use a variety of assessment information to help them understand children's progress, and intervene appropriately when children require additional support to achieve successfully. This information includes standardised assessment data, assessments of planned pieces of work, and general classroom observation feedback. Self-assessment and peer-assessment strategies are used effectively by most teachers to help children develop a better understanding of their learning and the learning of their peers. Good arrangements for moderation, both within school and with improvement partnership and cluster schools, are in place to support teachers' confidence in professional judgements. Senior leaders should continue with their plans to develop and use assessments which capture more effectively children's learning across different experiences and outcomes. This will help children to apply their learning in different contexts, and help teachers and parents to understand children's learning more effectively over time.

Teachers plan termly for literacy, numeracy and health and well-being. They also plan interdisciplinary learning contexts and experiences. Regular attainment meetings between the senior leadership team and all teachers are helpful in discussing children's progress in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. Children requiring additional support with their learning, including those who face barriers due to their socio-economic background are also identified. Teachers plan relevant interventions for individuals and groups of children who require additional support. These are reviewed regularly to ensure they continue to have a positive impact on children's progress. Senior leaders should continue to develop the effectiveness of approaches to monitor and track the progress of all children, to inform decisions about learning, teaching and meeting children's needs. They believe the local authority's development of a management information tool will support this process. Moving forward, teachers should build on current arrangements for moderation to ensure that there is a shared understanding of standards and expectations. This will help them make confident professional judgements about how well children are progressing.

Across the school, learning, teaching and assessment is variable. Senior leaders recognise that a next step will be to develop a more consistent understanding amongst all staff of what high quality practice in this area looks like in Ancrum Road Primary School. It should focus on effective pedagogy, and draw on strong practice which is evident across the school.

Raising attainment and achievement

The school's most recent collection of predicted data on Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) levels shows that by the end of P1, most children are expected to achieve the appropriate level in listening and talking, reading, writing, and mathematics and numeracy. By the end of P4, most children are expected to achieve the appropriate level in reading, writing, and listening and talking. The majority are expected to achieve the appropriate level in numeracy and mathematics. By the end of P7, most children are expected to achieve the appropriate level in reading, writing, listening and talking, and numeracy and mathematics.

As a result of a range of inspection activity, the inspection team concludes that the majority of children could be making better progress in their learning, and achieving higher standards. They are not yet secure enough in their learning to apply the range of skills and knowledge within a level in a range of contexts.

Overall most children are making good progress in literacy, however this is not consistent across all stages.

Across the school, most children speak confidently and articulately, and listen and respond well to each other and adults. They work in pairs and in groups, and this is having a positive impact on their skills in listening and talking. At early level most children listen well to explanations and information. They are developing their awareness of when to talk and when to listen. At first level most children can take turns in group discussions, making appropriate contributions. They can identify the main ideas from texts and share their ideas with others. At second level most children engage very respectfully with others, and share their enthusiasm for reading by describing their favourite genre and authors. They need to develop further their discussion and debating skills.

Most children across the school are keen readers and engage well with a wide variety of texts. They speak confidently about why they have chosen a text and their preference in relation to different authors. Children in Primary 2 and 7 participate regularly in paired reading, which is having a positive impact on their reading for enjoyment. At early level, most children can identify common words, and use their knowledge of sounds and letters to read words. At first level most children are enthusiastic readers. They read with fluency and increasing expression, and have strategies to read unfamiliar words. They engage well with a range of texts and are able to share thoughts about characters and settings, as well as the main idea of the text. They can answer literal and inferential questions about texts, and can discuss a range of authors and explain why they like them. At second level most children are reading a wide variety of texts. They can select and sort information from a range of sources, making notes to show an understanding of a topic or issue. They can discuss features of language, for example sentence structure and punctuation, and explain how authors use a range of techniques to create suspense encouraging the reader to read on.

Across the school children write in a variety of genre. At early level most children can form lower case letters legibly. The majority attempt to spell words correctly and to write a sentence using a capital letter and full stop. At first level, most children are developing their understanding of sentence structure and use conjunctions and basic punctuation. They start sentences in a variety of ways and write for a variety of purposes. At second level most children use appropriate vocabulary to convey thoughts and feelings when developing characters and settings. They use vocabulary well for specific purposes when creating texts in a variety of contexts, including the use of rhetorical questions and emotive language in persuasive writing. They can also use similes and metaphors appropriately to enhance their writing. Most children self-assess their writing confidently against success criteria, and feedback from the class teachers also helps children 'up level' their writing. Across the school, there is a need to improve the quality of children's writing.

Overall, most children are making good progress in numeracy although this is not consistent across all stages.

At early level, most children are able to identify and recognise numbers from 0 to 20 with confidence. They have a good understanding of fractions and are able to split a whole into smaller parts. They can also use simple addition and subtraction, using coins to pay for items. Across first and second level, most children have a good understanding of place value and how to calculate number problems efficiently. Children need to develop their skills in explaining their thinking to their peers and teachers. Teachers recognise that further work is required on fractions, decimals and percentages as children do not yet have a full understanding of the relationship between all three. At second level, children need to revisit measurement. Across the school, children's skills in mental agility are improving. Most can identify and use different mental strategies to complete calculations.

At both early and first level, children are not confident in describing common two-dimensional shapes and three-dimensional objects. At upper stages of the school, children have created their own shapes and objects, and are able to discuss their properties. At second level, children need further practice to support

their progress in shape, position and movement. Children were unable to use appropriate mathematical vocabulary and notation.

At early level, most children can collect objects and ask questions to gather information, organise and display findings in different ways. This needs to be extended at first level, so that children can improve their progress in displaying data in real-life contexts. At second level, children carry out surveys and present information in different ways. Children are not always able to apply their knowledge and understanding from across the numeracy organisers in different contexts.

Overall, there has been an increase in attainment across all organisers of literacy and numeracy over the last three years across the school. Particular dips in performance at selected stages have been identified. The head teacher acknowledges that to raise attainment even further a continued focus on effective pedagogy is required.

There is a strategic overview in place which allows senior leaders to identify children who are on track to achieve expected CfE levels. Teachers are asked to report on progress towards achievement of a level at three different intervals over the course of a year using a simple rating system. Analysis of this indicates improvements in performance over the course of the year.

Effective approaches are in place to monitor closely the attainment of children across deciles as a means to identify the poverty related attainment gap in the school. At each stage of the school, there is a clear indication of improving performance of children in SIMD one and two compared to those in deciles three to ten.

Children's achievements are promoted through home/school booklets related to developing the four capacities of CfE. This includes a range of progressive challenges which include good opportunities for family learning. There is a good range of after school clubs and activities on offer, including a bridge club and a variety of sports clubs. As a result, children are developing a range of skills for learning, life and work. A highly successful music initiative is supporting all children in Primary 5 to learn a musical instrument, and children enjoy performing in the school orchestra. As well as improving relationships and behaviour, this is developing important skills in listening and concentrating as well as perseverance and resilience. Children enjoy a range of opportunities to participate in the life and work of the school in other ways. For example, through involvement in the pupil council, as peer mediators and digital leaders. This is developing valuable citizenship and leadership skills, as well as improving the confidence of those involved.

Teachers track children's achievements in and out of school. These are widely celebrated through social media and at assemblies. We have discussed with senior leaders how they can develop approaches to tracking children's achievements further. In particular, teachers should help children to make links between the skills they are developing through achievement opportunities and the world of work. As planned, teachers should continue to develop approaches to learner participation across all stages of the school.

The head teacher's commitment to creating a socially inclusive environment, and her strong belief in equity of experience for all learners is a real strength. Over the last three years, there is clear evidence of identified children, who face significant barriers to their learning, making progress to reduce gaps in their attainment and achievement. Senior leaders provide resources and minimise the financial cost of learning experiences to bring about greater equity. This is well supported by the parent community who are instrumental in fundraising to pay the cost of transport. Commendably there have been no exclusions this session, and attendance is in line with national averages.

Full details of the Summarised inspection findings are available at:

<https://education.gov.scot/assets/inspectionreports/ancrumroadpssif270819.pdf>

Signed



Paul Clancy, Executive Director of Children and Families Service



Audrey May, Head of Service (Chief Education Officer)

Sharon McQuillan, Head Teacher, Ancrum Road Primary School

27 August 2019

Dear Parent/Carer

In June 2019, a team of inspectors from Education Scotland visited Ancrum Road 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.

- The headteacher's strong leadership and effective approaches to promoting social inclusion and equity of experience for all learners. She works very successfully with a wide range of partners which support children's learning, achievement and wellbeing effectively.
- The very inclusive school ethos which is underpinned by respectful and caring relationships. Children are happy, polite and have a positive attitude to learning.
- Staff's strong sense of teamwork and willingness to take on leadership roles, which is improving children's experiences and outcomes.

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

- Develop a more consistent understanding of what high-quality learning, teaching and assessment looks like in Ancrum Road Primary School. This should draw on strong practice which is evident across the school.
- Continue to raise attainment over time and close the poverty related attainment gap. This should include a focus on improving the quality of children's writing across the school.

We gathered evidence to enable us to evaluate the school's work using 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 Ancrum Road Primary School

Quality indicators	Evaluation
Learning, teaching and assessment	good
Raising attainment and achievement	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:

<https://education.gov.scot/inspection-reports/dundee-city/5323320>.

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 and carers about the school's progress as part of its arrangements for reporting on the quality of its schools.

Liz Angus
HM Inspector