

REPORT TO: SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 12 DECEMBER 2012

REPORT ON: EDUCATION SCOTLAND (HMIe) INSPECTION OF ST ANDREW'S RC PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY CLASS

REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

REPORT NO: 475-2012

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 The purpose of this paper is to report on the findings of Education Scotland (HMIe) following an inspection at St Andrew's RC Primary School and Nursery Class.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 It is recommended that the Scrutiny Committee:

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

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 None.

4.0 MAIN TEXT

4.1 St Andrew's RC Primary School and Nursery Class were inspected by Education Scotland in June 2012. They published a report on their findings on 30 October 2012. At the time of the inspection 340 children were on the Primary school roll and a further 40 children were receiving pre-school education in the nursery on a part-time basis.

4.2 The inspectors identified the following strengths of the school and nursery class:

- Children's experiences in the nursery class.
- The Honey Bee nurture programme in the early years of primary school.
- Staff involvement in the life and work of the school.

4.3 The following areas for improvement were agreed with the school and education authority:

- Raise children's attainment across all aspects of their learning.
- Ensure that approaches to support for learning meet the needs of all children.
- Improve the curriculum in line with the principles of Curriculum for Excellence.
- Introduce effective approaches to self evaluation which will improve the quality of education, including arrangements for tracking children's progress.

4.4 Quality Indicators

4.4.1 HMle 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
adequate/satisfactory	strengths just outweigh weaknesses
weak	important weaknesses
unsatisfactory	major weaknesses

4.4.2 The following quality evaluations were given at this inspection:

Quality Indicator	Primary School	Nursery Class
Improvements in performance	Weak	Good
Children's experiences	Satisfactory	Good
Meeting learning needs	Weak	Good
	For both the school and nursery class	
The curriculum	Weak	
Improvement through self-evaluation	Weak	

4.5 St Andrew's RC Primary School's *School Improvement Plan (2012-2015)* includes 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 calendars. The attached appendix outlines improvements made to date.

4.6 HMle indicated that St Andrew's RC Primary School and Nursery Class need additional support and more time to make the necessary improvements. Therefore, it is their intention to engage in an interim support visit, work alongside the local authority and maintain contact to monitor progress. It is also their intention to return to evaluate progress in improving provision within one year of the publication date of the report.

5.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

5.1 This report has been screened for any implications in respect of Sustainability, Strategic Environment Assessment, Anti-Poverty and Equality Impact Assessment and Risk Management.

5.2 There are no major issues.

6.0 CONSULTATION

6.1 This report has been subject to consultation with the Chief Executive, Director of Corporate Services and Head of Democratic and Legal Services.

7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 The following Background Papers were relied upon in preparation of this Report:

- Education Scotland (HMle) Inspection Report for St Andrew's RC Primary School and Nursery Class, Dundee City Council – October 2012.

MICHAEL WOOD
Director of Education

November 2012

Dundee City Council
Education Department
Scrutiny Committee Report

Inspection and Reporting

Inspection Agency	Education Scotland (HMIE)
Report publication date	30 October 2012

Name of establishment	St Andrew's RC Primary School and Nursery
Sector	Primary/Nursery
Name of headteacher / manager	Avril Barnett (Acting)/Lorna Ferry (Acting)
Roll	340 plus 40 part time nursery pupils

Inspection Outcomes

Quality Indicator	Nursery	Primary	Secondary
Improvements in performance	good	weak	
Learners' experiences	good	satisfactory	
Meeting learning needs	good	weak	
The curriculum	weak	weak	
Improvement through self-evaluation	weak	weak	

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

Key Strengths

Children's experiences in the nursery class
The "Honey Bee" nurture programme in the early years of the primary school
Staff involvement in the life and work of the school

Areas for Improvement and Action

Raise children's attainment across all aspects of their learning
Ensure that approaches to support for learning meet the needs of all children
Improve the curriculum in line with the principles of Curriculum for Excellence
Introduce effective approaches to self-evaluation which will improve the quality of education, including arrangements for tracking pupil progress.

Analysis of Report
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Following the inspection week the department took immediate action to enhance the capacity of leadership – the Education Manager and Quality Improvement Officer taking charge of the establishment. The PT (SfL) was released from class commitments for session 12/13 to allow her to improve the quality of support for learning and to address the significant issues related to Additional Support Needs across the nursery and primary.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The School Improvement Plan 2012/15 reflects the areas for improvement and action and provides a clear strategic focus for school improvement.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HMIE returned to the school on November 5/6 2012 for a support visit (Appendix 1). Further to this visit a “confidence statement” was issued which confirmed that the school had made significant progress and that plans/records were detailed and accurate with very appropriate targets and vision. Quotes from the “confidence statement” included: “plans were detailed and included the right priorities and tasks needed to bring about improvement”; “a number of important aspects had already been addressed”; “the new team, working with staff, has achieved a great deal in a very short period of time.”
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As part of the Department priority to introduce co-operative learning to all schools in Dundee, 3 staff have already attended these academies, with another 7 booked in for training this session. Staff already trained have cascaded strategies to their colleagues and peer visits to share good practice has begun. Staff already report that this is having a beneficial impact on learning and teaching.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Again, in line with Departmental priorities, the school is in phase 2 for the implementation of On Track With Learning, with 2 staff identified as Lead Personnel to take this forward and are working with other cluster schools to implement this strategy. Staff in nursery and early years are embracing Responsive Planning and are being supported by the link Child Development Officer.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff are being supported to improve the curriculum and have been given clear guidance on CfE and have been given inservice training in November 2012 on Building the Curriculum 4, skills development and planning for effective learning, teaching and assessment. HMIE will further support the school in Jan – March 2013 with this. Curriculum development will be a major focus for development during the remainder of this session.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approaches to quality assurance have been improved, with the production of a clear quality assurance calendar which demonstrates the purpose and impact of activities. Consultations have taken place with staff, pupils and parents and a number of improvements are taking place as a result eg working groups involving staff, parents, pupils and relevant partners to review homework, approaches to health and wellbeing and positive behaviour are being established with staff taking the lead in these.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Programmes of PRD/EPRD are in place and a more robust approach to absence management is evident to reduce the significant levels of staff absence.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnerships with professional partners and other agencies are more effectively involved in supporting the life and work of the school and there are plans to extend this further eg, colleagues in community learning are willing to support a homework club in the school.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consultation with the newly elected pupil council on what it is like to be a learner in St Andrew's demonstrates that the pupils are more motivated and positive about the quality of learning and their voice in this.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clearly there is much more to achieve but the school has achieved a great deal and are confident that plans for further improvements will secure raised attainment and achievement for all learners.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HMIE have indicated that they will return in September/October 2013 to follow through on the outcomes of the original report and will publish a report to parents/carers on their findings.

I was impressed by the very thorough and effective way in which both Avril Barnett, Education Manager and acting head and Margaret Foley, QIO had responded to the inspection. The plans were detailed and included the right priorities and tasks needed to bring about improvement. A number of important aspects had already been addressed. These included:

- 1 Child protection procedures and record keeping
- 2 Review of all LAAC children to ensure compliance with Council policy.
- 3 Addressing staff absence through formal council procedures
- 4 Addressing some of the issues surrounding behaviour emphasising the responsibility of class teachers
- 5 Establishing regular meetings with SfL staff and action minutes
- 6 Re-establishing effective partnership working to better meet the needs of young people and their families.
- 7 Engaging with parents where there were concerns surrounding a child. Providing support and access to other agencies if needed.
- 8 Extending the breakfast club by targeting individuals.
- 9 Appointing a health assistant to increase capacity within health and wellbeing.
- 10 Introduced more in-depth and diagnostic assessments. Involving parents during the assessment process.
- 11 Increased the time available for SfL staff to consult with class teachers.
- 12 Provided appropriate CPD for staff especially around increased expectations and improving behaviour (Education Scotland staff)
- 13 Introduced focussed class visits by SMT to address pace and challenge and differentiation. .
- 14 Consulted with the newly elected Pupil council on what it is like to be a learner in St. Andrew's school.
- 15 Introduced a new SfL referral form
 - One development still at early stages is the development of a "nurturing school". We agreed that this will be a challenging agenda for some staff but that it is important that all staff accept that all children's health and wellbeing is the responsibility of all.
 - The review of SfL is well underway. There is a need to further develop the capacity of a few to undertake all the roles and responsibilities associated with SfL. The management team are very aware of this and are providing clear direction including robust monitoring in order to secure improvement.

Overall I feel that the new team, working with staff, has achieved a great deal in a very short period of time. They plan to use the RIF to engage further with staff on aspects of learning and teaching.

30 October 2012

Dear Parent/Carer

**St Andrew's RC Primary School and Nursery Class
Dundee City Council**

Recently, as you may know, my colleagues and I visited and inspected your child's school. During our visit, we talked to parents and children and we 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 the approaches staff are taking to improve children's literacy skills and promote positive behaviour. We also considered the impact of the school's nurture programme in supporting vulnerable children in the early stages of primary school. 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?

Children in the nursery learn and achieve well. They are happy, settled and play very well together. They are confident in choosing their activities and are motivated when learning outdoors. They enjoy talking about their learning and planning what they want to do next. Across the primary school, the quality of children's learning experiences is satisfactory overall. Most children behave well and are keen to learn. They respond well and make progress when teachers set challenging tasks and stimulating activities. Senior managers now need to ensure that this practice is of a consistently high standard across the school. Most children are able to work collaboratively on tasks, developing their skills in sharing opinions and ideas, and learning from each other. In a few classes, children receive good feedback on their learning. Overall, too many are unclear about their learning goals and what they have to do to improve. Your children tell us that they feel safe and well cared for in school. They think that the praise reward system is helping them to improve how they learn and behave. A few children display challenging behaviour. Children take on responsibilities willingly and achieve well in a range of volunteering and leadership activities. Those who have specific roles, for example as games trainers or buddies, show good leadership. Others achieve success and gain important skills in a range of cultural, sporting and enterprising activities.

In the nursery class, children are developing good early literacy and numeracy skills. Almost all talk confidently about their ideas and experiences. They enjoy looking at books and listening to stories and are beginning to recognise sounds and words. In play activities, most children are developing their early mathematical skills of counting and measuring. They have a good awareness of how to keep healthy and daily energetic play outdoors is helping them develop their movement skills. The primary school does not have a clear enough view of children's progress across all areas of the curriculum including literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. There is considerable room for improvement in how well children achieve. At the early stages, they are making a good start in English and mathematics. This is not sustained as children move from stage to stage. Most children listen well and follow instructions. They need more opportunities to develop their confidence in speaking out in class and to a wider audience. Across the school, children enjoy reading and, by the upper stages, they can discuss favourite authors and say why they like their books. At the early stages, children can write imaginative pieces using descriptive vocabulary. Overall, most children need to improve their skills in writing. In mathematics, there are major weaknesses in children's skills in mental and written calculations, problem solving and other important aspects of mathematics such as shape and measure. Children are making limited progress in developing their understanding of aspects of health and wellbeing.

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

In the nursery class, your children are supported to develop and learn well. There is considerable scope to improve how well your children are supported to develop and learn across the primary school. Nursery staff plan relevant activities related to children's interests and needs. They record children's progress in useful profiles and are aware that these can be developed further by involving children more in the process. In the primary classes tasks and activities do not yet fully meet the needs of all children. Most teachers share with children what they are going to learn during lessons. However, they need to extend the way in which they use questioning and activities to stimulate children's thinking and extend their learning and creativity. Teachers recognise the need to improve approaches to planning and assessment

to ensure all children make suitable progress. Staff in the primary school and nursery class know their children and families very well. They are committed to supporting children's care and welfare. There is a very strong community of faith through close links with the local Roman Catholic parish. The 'Honey Bee Tree' initiative provides a high level of nurture and support for vulnerable children in the early stages of primary school. Staff work well with external partners such as the educational psychologist to support children. Senior managers need to review the roles and responsibilities of support for learning staff to ensure all children receive appropriate support when they need it. In the nursery and primary classes, staff have helped to develop and implement changes to the curriculum, taking account of Curriculum for Excellence. As a result, children find their learning more active and interesting. All staff now need to ensure that all programmes of work help children build progressively on their learning and skills as they move from stage to stage.

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

Across the primary school and nursery class, staff are hardworking and caring. They want to improve children's learning experiences and develop children's skills. Your children would like more of a say in how to improve their school. Senior managers now need to work with staff, children, parents and other partners to develop a well-defined plan on how to achieve this. Teachers need to improve their approaches to evaluating the work of the school so that improvements can be made where necessary. Senior managers, together with all staff, need to implement a more rigorous approach to self-evaluation to drive forward school improvement. The school requires significant support from the education authority to develop its capacity for improvement.

This inspection of your school and nursery class found the following key strengths.

- Children's experiences in the nursery class.
- The 'Honey Bee' nurture programme in the early years of primary school.
- Staff involvement in the life and work of the school.

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

- Raise children's attainment across all aspects of their learning.
- Ensure that approaches to support for learning meet the needs of all children.
- Improve the curriculum in line with the principles of Curriculum for Excellence.
- Introduce effective approaches to self-evaluation which will improve the quality of education, including arrangements for tracking children's progress.

What happens at the end of the inspection?

As a result of our inspection findings we think that the school needs additional support and more time to make necessary improvements. Education Scotland will discuss with the local authority the most appropriate support in order to build capacity for improvement. We will engage in an interim support visit to the school, working alongside the local authority, and will maintain contact to monitor progress. We will return to evaluate progress in improving provision within one year of publication of this letter. We will then issue another letter to parents on the extent to which the school has improved. In that letter we will inform you if we are going to carry out a further inspection visit.

Fiona Robertson
HM Inspector

Additional inspection evidence, such as details of the quality indicator evaluations, for your school can be found on the Education Scotland website at <http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/inspectionandreview/reports/school/primsec/StAndrewsRCPrimaryDundeeCity.asp>.

Please contact us if you want to know how to get the report in a different format, for example, in a translation. You can contact us at enquiries@educationscotland.gsi.gov.uk or write to us at BMCT, Education Scotland, Denholm House, Almondvale Business Park, Almondvale Way, Livingston EH54 6GA.

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