

REPORT TO: SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – WEDNESDAY 28 SEPTEMBER 2016

REPORT ON: EDUCATION SCOTLAND (HMI) INSPECTION OF ST LUKE’S AND ST MATTHEW’S RC PRIMARY SCHOOL

REPORT BY: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SERVICE

REPORT NO: 310-2016

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 The purpose of this paper is to report on the findings of Education Scotland (HMI) following an inspection at St Luke’s and St Matthew’s RC 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 Executive Director of Children and Families Service 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 Luke’s and St Matthew’s RC Primary School was inspected by Education Scotland (HMI) in May 2016. They published a report on their findings on 21 June 2016. At the time of the inspection 251 children were on the primary school roll.

- 4.2 The inspectors identified the following key strengths of the school:
- Well-behaved, polite children who enjoy school and are eager to learn.
 - The improvements made to children’s early learning in literacy and steps taken to engage parents in how children learn.
 - A committed staff team, including a range of partners, who work well together in a respectful and caring learning environment.

- 4.3 The following areas for improvement were agreed with the school and Dundee City Council:
- Continue to improve the curriculum to ensure children make appropriate progress across all areas of the curriculum and benefit from relevant, high-quality learning experiences.
 - Ensure that approaches to self-evaluation result in improvements in learning and teaching and children’s attainment.

4.4 The following quality evaluations were given at this inspection:

Quality Indicator	Primary School
Improvements in performance	Satisfactory
Learners' experiences	Satisfactory
Meeting learning needs	Satisfactory
The curriculum	Satisfactory
Improvement through self-evaluation	Weak

4.5 The Area Lead Officer will maintain and monitor progress. Dundee City Council will provide a progress report within 12 months of the publication of this letter.

4.6 Education Scotland has issued increased expectations every session since 2011 for Quality Indicators 5.1, The Curriculum and 5.9 Self Evaluation. The school reflected against the increased expectations through their self-evaluation and acknowledged the areas where they need to continue to develop. It was acknowledged that the Head Teacher had a clear picture of the areas for improvement.

4.7 In relation to Improvements in performance and The Curriculum, there is a greater focus on effective tracking of progress across the Broad General Education and rigorous use of data. This is being supported by recent National developments such as the National Improvement Framework and the Attainment Challenge. The evaluations reflect the National context as well as the local context and the Local Authority is working with Education Scotland to support the school in its progress in this regard.

4.8 In relation to self-evaluation, there is a greater focus on every member of staff taking responsibility for their own career long professional learning and engagement in Professional Update, which has just been implemented nationally in the last session. As such schools are shifting the culture and raising the profile of professional learning. There is also a greater focus on leadership at all levels. The Education Manager and the Education Officer will continue to monitor the progress and identify appropriate professional learning opportunities and support as required particularly in the use of data to inform improvement activity.

4.9 St Luke's and St Matthew's RC Primary School's *School Improvement Plan (2015-2018)* already 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 gives an analysis of the report and outlines improvements made to date.

4.10 The Children and Families Service regularly analyse the results of inspections and internal Quality Assurance procedures to identify areas for support and work closely with Education Scotland to deliver appropriate professional learning for staff at all levels to ensure continuous improvement.

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. There are no major issues.

6.0 CONSULTATION

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

7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 None.

MICHAEL WOOD
Executive Director of Children and Families Service

September 2016

Dundee City Council
Education Department
Scrutiny Committee Report Summary Notes

Inspection and Reporting

Inspection Agency	HMI
Report Publication Date	21 June 2016

Name of Establishment	St Luke's and St Matthew's RC Primary School
Sector	Primary
Name of Head Teacher	Mr Neil Lowden
Roll	251

Inspection Outcomes

Quality Indicator	Primary	Nursery	Secondary
1.1 Improvements in Performance	Satisfactory		
2.1 Learners' Experiences	Satisfactory		
5.1 Meeting Learning Needs	Satisfactory		
5.1 The Curriculum	Satisfactory		
5.9 Improvement Through 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
satisfactory	strengths just outweigh weaknesses
weak	important weaknesses
unsatisfactory	major weaknesses

Key Strengths

Well-behaved, polite children who enjoy school and are eager to learn.

The improvements made to children's early learning in literacy and steps taken to engage parents in how children learn.

A committed staff team, including a range of partners, who work well together in a respectful and caring learning environment.

Areas for Improvement and Action

Continue to improve the curriculum to ensure children make appropriate progress across all areas of the curriculum and benefit from relevant, high-quality learning experiences.

Ensure that approaches to self-evaluation result in improvements in learning and teaching and children's attainment.

Analysis of Report

The School Improvement Plan 2016/17 reflects ongoing areas for improvement and action and provides a clear strategic focus for school improvement. The findings of the HMI Inspection will be taken into account for the targets for this coming session. The report reflects the evidence gathered to inform our priorities and our identified areas for improvement for the 2015 / 2018 plan.

The report recognises the children as a key strength and across the school, they are very well behaved and polite. They show respect to staff and to each other and are confident and enjoy talking to visitors. Most children are enthusiastic about learning and children at the early stages are making good progress with their early literacy. Overall, children are making satisfactory progress in their learning in English language and literacy and mathematics and numeracy. It should be noted that more recently most of our children achieved Early Level, Level 1 and Level 2 in literacy and in Primary 1 and 4 and this number was almost identical for numeracy. We also successfully closed gaps in numeracy levels at Primary 7 by June 2016 using targeted interventions through the Attainment Challenge.



Children's success in sports and other activities is well recognised around the school. Commendably, large numbers of children work towards improving their fitness in the lunchtime daily mile activity. They are gaining confidence through a range of opportunities to develop skills in expressive arts. This is very well supported by partners, including Dundee Repertory Theatre. Children also enjoy taking on leadership roles and raising money for charities such as Mary's Meals and SCIAF.

Across all stages, staff work very well together to create a welcoming and caring environment for children. They have positive relationships with children and their families, and close attention is given to children's emotional wellbeing. There is a strong link to the local church and all children participate in daily prayers and observance. A majority of children benefit from activities which are suitably challenging and relevant to their needs and interests. In the best examples, teachers plan learning well to ensure tasks and activities meet the needs of individual pupils. The Head Teacher has taken steps to raise the profile of the importance of high quality learning and teaching and this session will ensure quality assurance procedures are robust and rigorous to improve the quality of learning and teaching across the school. Opportunities will ensure staff can build on best practice in the school to ensure that tasks and activities are appropriate for all children.

Children who need extra help with their learning receive very well targeted support from effective support for learning teachers and well deployed support staff. This includes short daily sessions to support individual children in improving their literacy and numeracy skills. By the end of June 2016 the impact of this showed that the attainment data for this group had very positive trends in closing the gap in literacy.

Staff have worked well together to begin to improve children's experiences in literacy, numeracy, religious education and aspects of health and wellbeing. Across the school year, most children experience learning across a range of curriculum areas. The report recognised the need for clear learning pathways to be introduced for all curricular areas and this has now been completed to ensure children have high quality experiences across the Broad General Education. The school currently has a relentless focus on Raising Attainment in Literacy, Numeracy and improving our children's outcomes in Health and Wellbeing. Recently we have started a number of initiatives through the Scottish Attainment Challenge such as a 'Summer School', 'Books for Breakfast' project and parent classes to support cooking and healthy eating at home to raise attainment, close the gap and improve health and wellbeing for our children.

The Head Teacher, who was in post one full year at the time of inspection, is a confident and caring leader who is respected by staff, the church and the school community. Since joining the school, he has learned a lot about its work and its community and now has a clearer picture of areas for improvement. All parents who responded in questionnaires are happy with the work of the school. They find staff approachable and enjoy the increased opportunities to engage with learning in class.

Signed		Executive Director
Signed		Head of Service
Signed	Neil Lowden	Head Teacher

21 June 2016

Dear Parent/Carer

**St Luke's & St Matthew's RC Primary School
Dundee City 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 the focus on improving attainment and the impact of partnerships across the school community. 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 school, children are very well behaved and polite. They show respect to staff and to each other. They are confident and enjoy talking to visitors. Most children are enthusiastic about learning. They listen with interest during lessons and respond well to teachers' instructions. Younger children enjoy repeating words aloud to learn and practise new vocabulary and sounds as part of the school's approach to literacy. At all stages, children frequently work well in pairs. They are familiar with class routines and, in the majority of classes, settle well to their work. Children would benefit from more opportunities to work in groups, and to have quiet time to complete independent tasks. Staff are increasing in confidence in sharing the purpose of learning with children and, in a few classes, children could talk about their learning and how they would know if they were doing well. Children enjoy sharing their 'learning walls' and some staff use these well to reflect on learning and celebrate success. Most staff take time to praise children and offer appropriate advice on how to improve. However, overall, approaches to learning and teaching are not of a consistently high quality across all stages. Too many lessons are overly teacher-led, meaning that children are not independent enough in their learning. We have asked the headteacher to ensure all staff apply appropriate standards in checking and marking children's work. All children visit the Information and Communication Technology suite weekly to access digital learning. Older children worked well in pairs to prepare a backdrop for an animation they were developing and children use cameras to record events and activities for display around the school. However, children have limited access to digital learning in classrooms.

Children's success in sports and other activities is well recognised around the school. Commendably, large numbers of children work towards improving their fitness in the

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Transforming lives through learning

lunchtime daily mile activity. They are gaining confidence through a range of opportunities to develop skills in expressive arts. This is very well supported by partners, including Dundee Repertory Theatre. Children talk with pride about 'the three giants' community performance event. They enjoy taking on leadership roles, for example in raising funds for SCIAF and Mary's Meals. Older children are committed to volunteering activities and achieving Pope Francis awards. The headteacher has taken steps to record children's achievements, including those gained out of school. We have encouraged staff to support children understand the important skills they develop from all these activities, so that they can apply them across their learning

Overall, children are making satisfactory progress in their learning in English language and literacy and mathematics and numeracy. Most children talk appropriately to their classmates and staff. They are becoming better at listening to each other. Children would benefit from more planned opportunities to develop their skills in listening and talking in groups. Children at the early stages are making good progress in reading. They are developing their skills using phonics and core words. By P7, they speak with enthusiasm about books they have read, and can identify a range of genres and popular authors. Most can talk about why they chose particular books, and all are very pleased that the school is now working in partnership with the local library to allow children to borrow books to take home. Children write for a range of purposes across the school year. Younger children used the post office play area to practise writing key words in sentences. Older children had written persuasive letters to Lord Sugar outlining why they might be considered as an apprentice. Others developed and performed drama scripts for war-time news reports. By P7, a majority of children write well at length, particularly in imaginative and personal writing. However, as children progress through the school, the quality of their writing is not of a consistently high enough standard. Across the school, children are developing their knowledge of numeracy and mathematics. Teachers are developing a more consistent approach to improving children's skills in mental calculation and this is beginning to improve children's confidence in working with numbers. In mathematics at the early stages, children were learning the names of 3D objects. Older children demonstrated managing a budget in their 'Lunar Theme Park' activity. Others enjoyed using data they had gathered to construct a bar graph. Children at the early stages are making steady progress. However, by P7, only half of the children are attaining appropriate levels in numeracy and mathematics. There is scope to improve children's progress in numeracy and mathematics across the school and to ensure children can apply their learning across the curriculum. In religious education, children learn about respect and care for others. They show an understanding of learning from mistakes and are reaching an awareness of showing Mercy. As part of health and wellbeing, children across the school can talk about keeping themselves safe, including on-line, and can describe steps they would take to get help if they needed it.

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

Across all stages, staff work very well together to create a welcoming and caring environment for children. They have positive relationships with children and their families, and close attention is given to children's emotional wellbeing. There is a strong link to the local church and all children participate in daily prayers and observance. A majority of children benefit from activities which are suitably challenging and relevant to their needs and interests. In the best examples, teachers

plan learning well to ensure tasks and activities meet the needs of individual pupils. Overall however, teachers were not taking enough account of children's individual learning needs and, in a few lessons, activities were too challenging. Staff should now build on best practice in the school to ensure that tasks and activities are appropriate for all children. Children who need extra help with their learning receive very well targeted support from effective support for learning teachers and well deployed support staff. This includes short daily sessions to support individual children in improving their literacy and numeracy skills. Staff work well with a range of partners across children's services to ensure children and their families benefit from specialist support.

Staff have worked well together to begin to improve children's experiences in literacy, numeracy, religious education and aspects of health and wellbeing. Across the school year, most children experience learning across a range of curriculum areas. For example, children at the middle stages were exploring features of rainforests, and others were developing communication without words in drama. Overall however, there are a number of areas requiring attention to ensure that Curriculum for Excellence is fully implemented. Since taking up post, the headteacher has identified the need to develop a clearer, shared understanding of what the school is trying to achieve for children through its curriculum. Building on the strong ethos established, raising attainment for all now needs to be the centre of the school's aims. Staff recognise the need to improve approaches to assessment and recording children's progress to ensure they all attain as highly as possible. Across the school, children are not yet experiencing a fully broad and balanced, progressive curriculum that provides quality learning pathways in all curricular areas. There are gaps in children's knowledge and skills. For example, children's experiences in music, social studies and science need to be improved. Staff need to ensure that contexts for learning across the school are relevant and meaningful to children living in the suburbs of Dundee. In reviewing the curriculum, staff should make more regular and effective use of the local area and the wider city context to enhance children's knowledge and experiences. We have asked staff to ensure children learn more about skills for learning, life and work. Children benefit from positive transition arrangements between P7 and St Paul's RC Academy. This includes opportunities to experience a range of curricular areas in the secondary school. The school receives children into P1 from a range of pre-school settings in the community and staff take effective steps to get to know children and plan well for their arrival in school.

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

The headteacher is a confident and caring leader who is respected by staff, the church and the school community. Since joining the school, he has learned a lot about its work and its community and now has a clearer picture of areas for improvement. He recognises the need to focus his leadership and self-evaluation activities to ensure further improvements to attainment, learning and teaching and the curriculum. The deputy headteacher provides effective pastoral care and support, and a number of staff take on leadership roles across the school. Staff recognise that the pace of change and improvement at the school in recent years has been too slow. The staff team are committed to improving children's experiences and welcome opportunities to learn and improve their skills. However, care needs to be taken to ensure these learning activities focus on the school's key priorities and lead to improvements in

children's learning and achievements. The headteacher and most staff are becoming more confident in using data to inform their work. However, they were unable to provide reliable data on children's progress at key stages in learning. There is a need for staff to develop a shared understanding of standards in children's attainment and achievement. The headteacher has observed learning and teaching across the school and is aware that these observations require greater rigour, leading to improvements for children. Overall, the quality of learning and teaching is not consistently good enough across the school. All parents who responded in questionnaires are happy with the work of the school. They find staff approachable and enjoy the increased opportunities to engage with learning in class.

This inspection found the following key strengths.

- Well-behaved, polite children who enjoy school and are eager to learn.
- The improvements made to children's early learning in literacy and steps taken to engage parents in how children learn.
- A committed staff team, including a range of partners, who work well together in a respectful and caring learning environment.

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

- Continue to improve the curriculum to ensure children make appropriate progress across all areas of the curriculum and benefit from relevant, high-quality learning experiences.
- Ensure that approaches to self-evaluation result in improvements in learning and teaching and children's attainment.

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. Our Area Lead Officer will work with Dundee City Council to build capacity for improvement, and will maintain contact to monitor progress. We shall ask Dundee City Council to provide us with a progress report within 12 months of the publication of this letter and decide at that point whether a further inspection is required.

Susan Duff
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/StLukesandStMatthewsRCPriamarySchoolDundeeCity.asp>

If you would like to receive this letter in a different format, for example, in a translation please contact the administration team on the above telephone number.

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