

18 June 2024

Dear Parent/Carer

In May 2023, HM Inspectors published a letter on St Paul's Primary School and Nursery Class (Shettleston). The letter set out a number of areas for improvement which we agreed with the school and Glasgow City Council. Recently, as you may know, we visited the school again. During our visit, we talked to children and worked closely with the headteacher and staff. We heard from the headteacher and other staff about the steps the school has taken to improve. We looked at particular areas that had been identified in the original inspection. As a result, we were able to find out about the progress the school has made and how well this is supporting children's learning and achievements. This letter sets out what we found.

**The headteacher should work with all staff to develop more rigorous approaches to monitoring the quality of learning, teaching and assessment to ensure this is of a consistently high quality across the nursery and school.**

Approaches to monitoring the quality of learning, teaching and assessment across the school and nursery have improved.

The newly appointed headteacher and depute headteachers are strong, effective leaders. They have high aspirations for the school and nursery to achieve the best possible outcomes for all children. Together, they have created a positive ethos across the school and nursery and all staff are empowered to lead improvements.

On taking up post in September 2023, the headteacher prioritised rightly an initial review of learning, teaching and assessment across the school and nursery. They identified quickly the need to develop clear and effective processes for ongoing quality assurance of the school and nursery to ensure robust improvement. They supported senior leaders effectively to develop fully their understanding of high-quality self-evaluation through professional learning using national guidance for schools and early learning and childcare settings. Together, they reviewed and updated successfully their approaches to evaluating and monitoring the work of the school and nursery.

The headteacher developed a robust quality assurance calendar. Senior leaders use regular, effective approaches to monitoring and evaluating learning, teaching and assessment across the school. They use data gathered to identify clearly points for action for the full staff team and for individual teachers and practitioners. This is helping to ensure consistency in the improved quality of learning, teaching and assessment across the school and nursery. All staff work at a brisk pace to make identified improvements to their practice. Senior leaders maintain robust, regular reviews of staff practice and this is helping to ensure improvements are becoming embedded across the school and nursery. As planned, senior leaders should build on this positive start to further develop the quality and consistency of learning, teaching and assessment across the school and nursery.

**The headteacher should provide clearer direction to improve the quality of play-based learning across the early level. Teachers and practitioners should improve the learning environment to enable children to experience learning that promotes creativity and investigative play.**

Across the early level, staff have made significant improvements to the quality of play-based learning. Children across the early level enjoy learning as they play and there is a calm, productive ethos in playrooms and classrooms. Local authority representatives and senior leaders have a strong commitment to continue to support staff to develop their skills further.

All early years staff have engaged effectively with professional learning about national guidance on play-based learning. They visited other settings to observe good practice and environments that promote effective and purposeful play. They have developed strong links with staff from other settings and this should support them moving forward as they continue to develop their practice further.

All early years staff reviewed their learning environments following the original inspection. They have created attractive environments, indoors and outside, which inspire children to be creative and curious in their play. In the nursery, children are beginning to lead their own learning and staff are becoming increasingly responsive to children's needs and interests. As a next step, teachers in the early stages need to develop further their skills in observing children's learning as they play. They need to consider the role of the adult more carefully. Teachers need to use observations of children's learning to help them plan and create a greater balance between adult-led and child-led experiences.

Early years teams in the school and nursery meet regularly with senior leaders to review children's experiences. They ensure learning environments are constantly evolving to best meet the needs of all children as they grow and develop. They use data gathered about children's progress and achievement well and regularly to plan motivating and relevant provocations and activities. This is helping most children to make good progress in their learning.

**The headteacher should work with practitioners in the nursery to develop a clearer way to monitor children's progress. This will help practitioners to understand what children are able to do and what they need to do next. This will better help them to meet the needs of all learners, so they make the best possible progress in their learning.**

The headteacher and practitioners have improved approaches to monitoring children's progress. Practitioners have a clear understanding of what children know and what they need to do next. Practitioners have improved how effectively they meet the needs of all children.

All practitioners engaged in high-quality professional learning, and discussion with staff in other settings, to develop their skills of observing children's learning and the use of data. They now make mostly high-quality observations of children's learning. They record these observations well in online journals which parents value and access regularly. They link observations successfully with Curriculum for Excellence experiences and outcomes. Practitioners meet weekly to discuss all children's progress. They identify well gaps in children's knowledge and skills and plan effectively provocations and activities to better meet

children's needs. They now need to use data better to identify children who would benefit from more targeted support.

Practitioners now use developmental pathways for communication and language to closely monitor the progress of children with English as an additional language (EAL). Data gathered shows that almost all children who have EAL are making good progress against individual milestones. Practitioners are beginning to use developmental milestones in the Pre-birth to age three curriculum for a few children. They have developed individual support plans for these children, but they do not yet set specific enough targets within these plans. As a next step, practitioners should involve parents and children fully to set specific, measurable and achievable targets within these plans. This should help them to demonstrate better the progress children are making.

Senior leaders have recently introduced a whole school tracking format which will demonstrate clearly children's progress as they move through nursery and the school. Practitioners have engaged with this enthusiastically and are leading the pilot of the use of this tracker for the whole school. They use their newly developed, robust individual trackers well to inform their professional judgements about children's attainment and progress. Senior leaders now have clear data which shows that the majority of children are on track to achieve early level by the end of P1 in literacy and numeracy.

**Practitioners in the nursery need to develop their understanding of the wellbeing indicators and use them effectively with children. In doing so, they should help children to understand what they can do to improve their own wellbeing.**

Practitioners in the nursery have improved their understanding of the wellbeing indicators. They have improved how they use the indicators to help children to improve their own wellbeing.

Practitioners in the nursery engaged well in professional learning to refresh and develop their knowledge and understanding of the wellbeing indicators. Senior leaders and practitioners evaluated their daily practice and identified next steps to improve their use of the wellbeing indicators. As a first step, they began to use the language of wellbeing in their daily interactions with all children. For example, when a child uses a knife appropriately when spreading at snack time, practitioners highlight this and explain how the child is being safe. Practitioners identified that 76% of children in the nursery have English as an additional language (EAL). Most children with EAL found the language of wellbeing particularly challenging. To support children further, they implemented effectively a wellbeing focus for each planning block. Practitioners and teachers across the early level work collaboratively to support children to learn about each individual indicator. For example, all children in P1 and nursery enjoyed learning about achievement through a series of joint activities such as listening to stories. As a result, a few nursery children explain effectively what it means to achieve something new. This focused work is helping children to use the language of wellbeing more regularly.

Children enjoy using interactive displays to help them explain the meaning of each wellbeing indicator. They demonstrate their wellbeing as they play and learn. For example, they enjoy being active and healthy as they run, climb and balance in the outdoor area. Children demonstrate safety as they move around the nursery and play together. They take

responsibility effectively when they tidy away resources and get dressed for outdoor play. All children demonstrate respect well to each other and to adults and there is a warm nurturing ethos. They invite others to join them in their play ensuring everyone is included in the life of the nursery. As a next step, practitioners need to help children to identify aspects of their wellbeing they could improve and support them fully to develop strategies to do so.

### What happens next?

The school has made some progress since the original inspection. We will ask for a report on progress within one year of the inspection. This report will inform any decision made by Education Scotland regarding further engagement. This may include another inspection visit. When such a decision is made, we will write to you again detailing the improvements the school has made and outlining any further action, agreed with Glasgow City Council that we intend to take.

Katharine Crombie  
HM Inspector