

25 June 2019

Dear Parent/Carer

In April 2019, a team of inspectors from Education Scotland and the Care Inspectorate visited Holytown Primary School and Nursery Class. 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 positive start made by the new headteacher to gain the respect and confidence of all stakeholders. She displays strong leadership skills and is working well with children, staff, parents and partners to improve aspects of the life of the school and nursery class. This includes ensuring more consistent learning and teaching across the school, and implementing strategies to raise attainment and achievement.
- Children's engagement in work related to the development of children's rights. This is leading to more positive and respectful relationships at the primary stages.
- The positive changes that have been made to the nursery environment, both indoors and outdoors.

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

- Enable practitioners in the nursery to engage in professional learning to deepen their understanding of the planning cycle. This will support them to plan more effectively to meet children's individual care and learning needs.
- Continue to develop consistency in learning, teaching and assessment across the school and nursery class. This needs to include teachers and practitioners linking their planning of learning and teaching and assessment more closely, and sharing effective practice more regularly and systematically.
- Continue to support teachers and practitioners to engage in a range of moderation activities. This will help them to become more accurate in assessing children's progress against national assessment standards.
- Take forward plans to track and monitor children's progress in a more robust way, across all areas of the curriculum. This will help staff to provide appropriate interventions for individual and groups of children to improve their attainment and achievement.

We gathered evidence to enable us to evaluate the school's work using quality indicators from [How good is our school? \(4th edition\)](#) and [How good is our early learning and childcare?](#) 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 Holytown Primary School and Nursery Class

Quality indicators for the primary school	Evaluation
Learning, teaching and assessment	satisfactory
Raising attainment and achievement	satisfactory
Descriptions of the evaluations are available from: How good is our school? (4th edition), Appendix 3: The six-point scale	

Quality indicators for the nursery class	Evaluation
Learning, teaching and assessment	weak
Securing children's progress	weak
Descriptions of the evaluations are available from: How good is our early learning and childcare? Appendix 1: The six-point scale	

Here are the Care Inspectorate's gradings for the nursery class

Care Inspectorate standards	Grade
Quality of care and support	adequate
Quality of environment	good

Requirements/recommendations made by Care Inspectorate for the nursery class

During the previous Care Inspectorate inspection, the setting had no requirements and three recommendations. From these, one recommendation has been met. Outstanding issues relating to CI to provide details are carried forward in this inspection. As a result of this inspection, there are two additional recommendations.

Recommendations

- We recommend that children are better supported to participate in freely chosen, extended play, which is stimulating and incorporates problem solving, creativity, positive risk taking and imagination.

To achieve this, consideration should be given to:

- the adults role in observing and scaffolding play
- time available to play
- rules that create barriers to play
- opportunities for positive risk taking
- opportunities to freely transport equipment

This is to ensure that children's care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state, "my social and physical skills, confidence, self-esteem and creativity are developed through a balance of organised and freely chosen extended play, including using open ended and natural materials" (HSCS 1.31), "I make informed decisions about the risks I take in my daily life, and am encouraged to take positive risks which enhance the quality of my life" (HSCS 2.24), and "as a child, I can direct my own play and activities in the way that I choose, and freely access a wide range of experiences and resources which are suitable for my age and stage, which stimulate my natural learning, curiosity and creativity" (HSCS 2.27).

- We recommend that the service develops children's personal plans which identify their needs and demonstrate how these will be met. Personal plans should be in place within 28 days of a child starting at the service, and should be reviewed every six months as a minimum with parents and carers (more if needs change).

To achieve this consideration should be given to:

- children's prior experiences before starting nursery
- accurate completion of 'all about me' records
- regular review's with parents and carers about children's needs
- development of individualised strategies to meet children's needs
- monitoring children's progress

This is to ensure that children's care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state, "my personal plan is right for me because it sets out how my needs will be met, as well as my wishes and choices" (HSCS 1.15), "my care and support meets my needs and is right for me" (HSCS 1.19), and "my needs, as agreed within my personal plan are fully met, and my wishes and choices are respected" (HSCS 1.23).

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

<https://education.gov.scot/inspection-reports/north-lanarkshire/8512027>

What happens next?

We are not at present confident from our visit that the nursery, as part of the school, has effective arrangements for ensuring continuing improvement in the quality of education for all learners. We will return within one year to explore this further. After the return inspection we will report our findings to you.

Celia McArthur
HM Inspector

Lynne Alexander
Care Inspector