Summarised Inspection Findings

Knowepark Primary School

Scottish Borders Council

SEED No: 5619424

27 June 2017

Transforming lives through learning

1.3 LEADERSHIP OF CHANGE — satisfactory

This indicator focuses on collaborative leadership at all levels to develop a shared vision for change and improvement which is meaningful and relevant to the context of the school within its community. Planning for continuous improvement should be evidence-based and linked to effective self-evaluation. Senior leaders should ensure the need for change is well understood and that the pace of change is appropriate to ensure the desired positive impact for learners. The themes are:

- *Developing a shared vision, values and aims relevant to the school and its community*
- *Strategic planning for continuous improvement*
- *Implementing improvement and change*

- Overall, leadership across the school is satisfactory. Knowepark Primary School has encountered a challenging period of leadership over a number of years. The current management team have been in place since August 2015 and are now leading change which is embraced by children, their families and staff. The ethos of the school has improved and as a result parents report a more welcoming atmosphere. The headteacher has prioritised building positive relationships and confidence amongst the staff team and school community. This is working well and the headteacher must now use this emerging confidence to increase the pace of change across the school.

- The school vision and values statement has been in place for some time. As set out within the current improvement plan, the school should, without delay, engage all stakeholders in developing a new shared vision and set of values which better reflect the current context of the school. As yet, there is not a sufficiently shared understanding of how the school collaborates with its community to bring about the best possible standards of learning, teaching, attainment and achievement for all children. The headteacher has made a positive start to talking with and surveying parents and stakeholders. The school benefits from a supportive parent council and fundraising group who are very willing to engage in initiatives which benefit the school community. Work to improve the voice of children across the school is developing well. Children now have the opportunity to take part in a variety of committees which have begun to make a difference to their school community.

- The management team demonstrate a positive and practical commitment to developing a culture and understanding of continuous improvement across the school. They are working closely with staff to grow confidence in and professional understanding of the theories and practices of educational thinking which they have chosen to use in their learning environments. This will help staff make decisions which are informed and contribute positively to the pace of change. As a result of the supportive coaching and mentoring by the senior management team, staff are now undertaking individual professional enquiry which will be evaluated later in the school year.

- Across the school, staff are becoming increasingly confident in collaborating with each other and in working parties to address specific improvement priorities that are emerging. They now need to ensure that this collaboration is focused on bringing about agreed improvements which are a priority for the school. The headteacher has been supportive of staff in enabling them to begin to learn to evaluate and analyse

the impact of their teaching on learning. This is at an early stage and staff would benefit from sharing the good practice which exists in a number of classes. The school should now prioritise the development of a strategic improvement agenda which will progress consistent, high quality learning and teaching across the school and ensure improved outcomes for all learners.

- The management team has a good understanding of the changing context of the school and is beginning to use this data to inform their thinking and decision making. This information can be combined with data the school already holds and used more effectively to track and monitor the progress of all children. As planned, this important information also needs to be used by staff to help influence learning, teaching and assessment approaches within learning environments. The headteacher needs to continue to guide staff in developing a deeper understanding of the socio economic context of the school and how this can inform their approaches to ensuring wellbeing and equity for all children.

- The senior management team engage with staff to monitor and evaluate what is working well and what needs to improve through self-evaluation. Senior managers spend time in learning environments and provide helpful formal and informal feedback to staff. A higher priority now needs to be given to ensuring health and wellbeing is progressed and embedded across the school and that the learning needs of all children are met effectively.

2.3 LEARNING, TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT — satisfactory

This indicator focuses on ensuring high-quality learning experiences for all children and young people. It highlights the importance of highly-skilled staff who work with children, young people and others to ensure learning is motivating and meaningful. Effective use of assessment by staff and learners ensures children and young people maximise their successes and achievements. The themes are:

- *Learning and engagement*
- *Quality of teaching*
- *Effective use of assessment*
- *Planning, tracking and monitoring*

Learning and engagement:

- In most classes staff have established strong positive relationships with the children creating an ethos where children are encouraged to do their best.

- In most classes children are motivated, actively engaged and enjoy what they are learning. Where children have the opportunity to work collaboratively on well planned activities they work well in pairs, groups and individually helping each other in completing tasks. Where activities are less challenging children become less engaged and learning is disrupted.

- Teachers are at an early stage of involving children in planning their learning by supporting them to generate 'Big Questions' of what they would like to find out about within the context of given topics and themes. Many observed lessons were overly teacher led with missed opportunities for children to take on leading roles. Teachers now need to plan for learning to be less-directed by teachers in order to support children to be to become more independent and creative. The use of open ended questions, problem solving and higher order thinking skills will support this and help ensure all learners receive an appropriate level of challenge to do the best they can.

- The school has identified the use of digital technology and digital learning as a priority for improvement. Extending the use of digital technologies would further support children in developing key skills for learning, life and work and in becoming independent learners.

Quality of Learning and Teaching:

- We found the quality of learning and teaching across the school to be too variable. In the most effective practice, children are engaged by a range of interesting learning activities, the purpose of learning is made clear by teachers and children understand what it is they are doing including how it builds upon their prior learning. The school should decide how this best practice can be shared in order to support improvements in practice across the whole school The school should develop greater consistency in the quality of children's learning experiences.

- The school is in the process of introducing a number of pedagogical changes such as play based learning, a new approach to teaching numeracy and mathematics and creating effective learning environments. This is now an opportune time to evaluate the impact of these approaches on the outcomes for children to date and determine how these are going to be further developed to ensure they are having the desired

impact on children's attainment and achievement.

- Most teachers make regular use of interactive white boards to enhance their teaching. There is scope for more lessons to be briskly-paced, with activities better matched to meeting the needs of all learners.

- There were a few examples of teachers applying literacy and numeracy skills across other curricular areas. The next step for the school is to assist children in making connections between the different aspects of their learning. It would help children engage more deeply with their learning if there were more opportunities for children to apply their skills and knowledge in new and unfamiliar contexts.

Effective use of Assessment:

- The school should revisit Assessment for Learning to enable staff to understand why and how they can use Assessment for Learning approaches effectively to support children in taking responsibility for their learning and in making progress in their learning.

- Children would benefit from a whole school approach to target setting to help children take ownership in improving their learning. Most children cannot yet confidently talk about their own strengths and next steps in learning as individual learners

- In a few classes, children have begun to assess their own and each other's work. In moving forward this now needs to be guided more by the success criteria of the lessons in order to provide more meaning feedback which will lead to improvements.

- Assessment is not yet integral enough to planning for effective learning. This is reflected in learning intentions and success criteria set which at times do not reflect the appropriate standards and are not always challenging enough for all learners. The school should move forward with their plans to support staff in selecting assessment approaches which are fit for purpose and which generate a wide range of assessment evidence of learning.

- Overall staff use assessment approaches to gather evidence of learning at each stage however teachers do not always use this information effectively to determine next steps in learning, to support transitions or to track progress over time. In addition a number of standardised assessments are used at given stages. Holistic assessments are being developed by teachers to assess their Interdisciplinary Learning. The use of Rich Task Assessments and Holistic Assessments should be expanded and will create rich evidence of children's ability to apply their learning in challenging situations. The school should now review their approach to assessment and devise a whole school Framework for Assessment which will be proportionate and manageable leading to a more consistent approach at all stages which will support raising attainment for all.

- To date the moderation activities in school have focused on staff working collegiately to plan themes and topics across a level. Staff talk enthusiastically of their participation in this way of planning stating it is helping them understand what progression looks like across a level. Staff have also worked together to produce a set of benchmarks on 'end of level expectations'. These take account of the Progress Trackers which have been developed at cluster level. The school staff

should now work together to develop their skills in making robust professional judgement using published national benchmarks in moderation activity in school, across the cluster and beyond. The school should continue with the existing plans for improving moderation and explore how this can be extended to other curriculum areas.

Planning Tracking and monitoring:

- Planning learning is based on the Experiences and Outcomes across all curricular areas. Staff have worked collegiately to develop a three year cycle of Inter-disciplinary Learning Themes. Teachers should ensure that their plans are responsive to the needs of their learners and that they clearly build on prior learning. The plans should include planning for groups and individuals.

- Progress Trackers have been developed cluster level. The school now needs to take time to ensure there is clarity around how these should be used to determine learning pathways for individual children so that they are used consistently to support all learners achieving their best.

- Termly Curriculum Meetings include discussion around how well children are learning. These meetings would benefit from being more focused on attainment. Staff should now work together to ensure expectations are consistently high across the school in order to lead to raise attainment and achievement for all children.

- Monitoring and tracking is at an early stage of development. The headteacher and staff recognise the need to develop more rigorous approaches to tracking and monitoring children's progress and achievement that lead to effective interventions to raise attainment across all curricular areas.

- The Management Team should systematically monitor and evaluate progress of children with additional support needs, including those receiving 'universal support', to better gauge the effectiveness of interventions.

- The school collates a range of data, which includes the results of standardised assessments, to inform children's progress and achievement; however this data is currently not used effectively to inform learning and teaching. The school should consider extending the range and type of data collected in order to help identify the attainment gap and plan effective interventions in order to improve outcomes for all. There is a need to ensure all staff are trained in analysing and interpreting the data in order to support the planning of effective learning and teaching.

2.2 CURRICULUM: theme 2: Learning Pathways

- Curriculum pathways for literacy and English, numeracy and mathematics and health and wellbeing are supported through the recent implementation of progress trackers. These are at an early stage and the school should evaluate the impact these are having on progression of skills development. The school needs to continue to develop pathways to support children's development and understanding of mental, emotional and social wellbeing.

- The school has created benchmarks for literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing to provide guidance for staff on what learners should be able to do by the end of a level. The development of clear criteria for the teaching of writing would provide a helpful focus for teaching specific skills. Staff would now benefit from more specific guidance around the teaching of reading, writing, numeracy and maths to ensure consistency of approaches across the school and an impact on raising attainment.

- Staff have bundled experiences and outcomes for interdisciplinary learning (IDL) into a three year rolling programme to ensure breadth of learning. The school recognise that they now need to review and develop further this rolling programme to ensure there is clear progression in skills and knowledge across all curricular areas. Developing clear progression pathways for each curricular area will support staff in planning breadth, depth and progression and ensure that there is sufficient challenge in a variety of contexts.

- Digital technologies is an area which requires further development to ensure children are developing a wider range of technology skills and using digital technologies more effectively to enhance their learning.

- The school should ensure that future curriculum development work includes nursery staff to ensure progression across the early level. In further developing curriculum pathways and interdisciplinary learning contexts, staff should ensure these reflect a balance across all design principles.

2.7 PARTNERSHIPS: theme 3 Impact on learners – Parental Engagement

- Partnership with parents has been improving and strengthening in recent years. Responses from parents to Education Scotland questionnaire indicate most are happy with the school overall. Parents in focus groups are more confident that the school is addressing areas of concern.

- A few parents volunteer to support the school for example through delivering Bikeability training to P7s and participating in the weekly visit to the Haining Estate by nursery classes.

- The school has a supportive Parent Partnership group who serve as a consultative parent body as well as having a separate fundraising group. They are consulted on the school improvement priorities, but could be more involved in self-evaluation.

- In the last school year, that has been increasing opportunities for parents to become involved in supporting their child's learning with workshops on literacy, numeracy, and a meet the teacher event which have been very positively received. This now needs to be extended to and built upon more fully. The school should begin to demonstrate the impact of these partnerships on improved outcomes for learners.

- Parents receive an annual report, are invited to attend two parents' nights, and receive regular newsletters and class newsletters. A social media page is developing as a means of communicating with parents, carers and the wider community.

- In the nursery class, a stay and play session has very recently been introduced. Profiles are sent home termly to share with parents. There is scope to extend the ways in which parents are engaged in their child's learning. Sharing children's profiles will provide good opportunities to talk about children's progress and agree next steps in learning.

2.1: SAFEGUARDING

- The school submitted self-evaluation information related to child protection and safeguarding. Inspectors discussed this information with relevant staff and where appropriate children. In addition, inspectors examined a sample of safeguarding documentation. Areas for development have been agreed with the school and the education authority.

3.1 ENSURING WELLBEING, EQUALITY AND INCLUSION	weak

This indicator focuses on the impact of the school's approach to wellbeing which underpins children and young people's ability to achieve success. It highlights the need for policies and practices to be well grounded in current legislation and a shared understanding of the value of every individual. A clear focus on ensuring wellbeing entitlements and protected characteristics supports all learners to maximise their successes and achievements. The themes are:

- *Wellbeing*
- *Fulfilment of statutory duties*
- *Inclusion and equality*

Wellbeing:

- Overall positive relationships are evident across the school. However during the inspection week team members gathered evidence to show that a number of children are not receiving the appropriate support they require in relation to their wellbeing. As discussed with the school management team policies and procedures need to be reviewed to ensure there is a shared understanding of the value of every individual. All children need to be supported appropriately to maximise their successes and achievements.

- A minority of staff have some awareness of wellbeing indicators. As highlighted by the school they now need to work with all stakeholders to develop better approaches in delivering more coherent and consistent programmes across the curriculum to ensure that all children develop the knowledge, skills and understanding to keep them safe, health and achieving. This needs to include consideration of children's emotional and social wellbeing. In the best practice children have an awareness of the rights of the child. This should be developed as part of a whole school approach to wellbeing.

- The school does not have robust evidence to demonstrate the impact of its approach to ensuring or improving health and wellbeing outcomes for all children. The management team are aware of the need to focus upon this development which has not previously been a priority for the school. Developments should include working with children, parents, partners and staff to agree on a shared rationale for health and wellbeing that best meets the needs of the school community, and reflects the school's vision, values and aims.

- All staff need to be clear about their role in delivering health and wellbeing experiences and how this leads to improving outcomes for all children. The school needs to ensure children's prior learning and wider experiences in health and wellbeing are taken into account and that explicit links are made between other areas of work. There is a need for staff to track, monitor and evaluate accurately health and wellbeing and be able to demonstrate confidently improved outcomes for children.

- Whilst relationships around the school are generally positive, children would benefit from all stakeholders exploring the development and understanding of a whole-school approach to promoting positive behaviour. This should include clear and appropriate strategies that should be used in classrooms and the playground to

support low-level behaviour issues. Staff should continue to develop outdoor spaces and outdoor learning to promote wellbeing. The school has identified the need to work with all stakeholders to develop a definition of bullying and create a more effective anti-bullying policy.

- Partners who work with the school, to deliver or support key aspects of health and wellbeing, feel their contributions are valued by the school. The active schools co-ordinator is supporting children to participate in a wider range of physical activities within and beyond school. The home school link worker works with young people and their families when it is considered that additional targeted intervention may be required. This helps support parental involvement and engagement. Additional needs assistants provide valuable, effective and sensitive support in a variety of ways across the school.

- The school accesses and offers a number of programmes and partnership initiatives to support the wellbeing of children who face additional challenges. For example, a few children attend nurture groups and are making progress in developing personal and social skills. This is at an early stage of development and there is much greater scope for the understanding of the principles of nurture to be shared with all staff, parents and children. The school works well with partners such as an art and music therapist to support children with identified needs. As discussed with the school a next step should be to consider how they can ensure these individual programmes and initiatives are incorporated into a more coherent, structured programme of input for those children requiring additional support.

- Opportunities for children to express their views are increasing. There are a number of pupil committees in the school which allow children to have a voice in some decisions that affect them. Children are very keen to be involved in decision making and the school should embrace further opportunities for all children to give their views about school life. This should be extended to support children contributing actively to their own learning and school improvement.

Fulfilment of statutory duties:

- All documentation examined during the inspection week shows that the school complies with statutory requirements and codes of practice. Staff are regularly updated on statutory duties and follow local authority guidelines and procedures.

- The school has plans in place for most children who may be facing barriers in their learning. They now need to identify and follow clear processes which identify all children who would benefit from appropriate additional support. There is scope to develop further both long and short term targets which would support the close monitoring of children's progress. Children and their families should continue to be encouraged and supported to be involved in discussions about their learning.

- The school has a weekly assembly. This is led by the school leadership team and representatives from local churches. Each class plans and delivers one assembly during the school year. This offers children the opportunity to share their learning and classroom experiences. In discussion with the school they currently meet the statutory duty for the provision of Religious Observance.

- A nutritional analysis provided for the school lunch menus shows that the standard for sodium is not being consistently met over the four week menu cycle. However,

this analysis does not yet include the full range of meal choices available to children. This should be reviewed within the next cycle of menus.

Inclusion and equality

- Overall children, parents and staff report they are treated fairly and with respect. The school curriculum provides children with suitable opportunities to explore aspects of faith and religious belief. The headteacher and staff recognise the need to develop further opportunities for children to include wider aspects relating to equalities and inclusion.

- In developing their vision values and aims, the school has identified diversity as a priority. They should now work with children to further explore aspects of diversity and provide opportunities, through the curriculum, for staff, children and parents to gain a better understanding of what this means. This will help address some of the reported incidents of negative behaviour in the school. Additionally it will equip children better for learning, life and the world of work.

- The school should monitor and evaluate the impact of pace, challenge and differentiation in lessons to ensure that all children are included fully in all lessons. This should include those capable of more challenge.

- The school should keep under review arrangements for additional support for learning to ensure that all children are able to access the additional support they require. The school should ensure its approaches to identifying children who require additional support are more robust and effective. Staff should work more closely together, to select the most appropriate learning environment and maximise opportunities for all children to learn in class.

3.2 RAISING ATTAINMENT AND ACHIEVEMENT — satisfactory

This indicator focuses on the school's success in achieving the best possible outcomes for all learners. Success is measured in attainment across all areas of the curriculum and through the school's ability to demonstrate learners' achievements in relation to skills and attributes. Continuous improvement or sustained high standards over time is a key feature of this indicator. The themes are:

- *Attainment in literacy and numeracy*
- *Attainment over time*
- *Overall quality of learners' achievement*
- *Equity for all learners*

Attainment in literacy and numeracy:

- Curriculum for Excellence data provided by the school for listening and talking, reading, writing and numeracy at the end of session 2015/16 shows that cohorts of children are not yet attaining expected levels. The school Curriculum for Excellence judgements are not yet robust or give a clear enough indication of progress overall.

- Standardised assessment data for session 2015/16 shows achievement over time of individual pupils in reading, spelling, numeracy and maths. Overall, progress is satisfactory. The majority of P4 children attained expected levels for their age and stage in reading. By P6, most children attained appropriate levels of attainment in reading. Almost all children at P4 were achieving appropriately in numeracy but by P6 the number of children attaining sufficiently well is less than a third. Going forward, the school now should make greater use of data from standardised assessments. Assessment data needs to show improved progress and increased added value for all children.

Overall progress in literacy

- Overall progress in literacy is satisfactory. The attainment across the school and across classes is too variable. The school should work towards raising attainment and improving the progression in learning.

Listening and talking:

- The standard of talking and listening achieved by most children is of a satisfactory level. Most children listen well to adults and one another. At the early stages the majority of children demonstrate effective listening skills and engage appropriately in simple conversations. A notable number of children at first level did not follow instructions successfully enough and were less well engaged in learning.

- Children working at second level are developing vocabulary and can talk about subjects of interest to them. More regular opportunities to talk about group reading texts should be considered to build further on skills of discussion and sharing learning.

Reading:

- Across the early stages, the majority of children use their phonics skills well to decode common words in texts. As they progress through the school, children read aloud with increasing confidence and fluency. Most children use their knowledge of punctuation, grammar and vocabulary well to add expression when reading.

- Children across the school read with a level of understanding that helps them carry out class activities and follow written instructions well.

- Children read regularly a good range of fiction for enjoyment. As a result of the focus on independent reading and regular use of class libraries children are developing an awareness of reading genre and author styles. The school should foster enjoyment of reading through its continued development of the school library as planned.

- Moving forward, the school should continue to develop group reading and ensure the teaching of reading is a more regular feature of reading sessions

Writing:

- Across the school, children are writing for a limited range of genre. Those who are working within second level are developing a growing understanding of writing criteria and what they need to do to improve. Staff use varied approaches to improve writing and this now needs to be developed consistently across all stages. There is significant scope at all stages for children to improve skills in writing and to build on these progressively. Children should write more routinely for real purposes and for a real audience.

Overall progress in numeracy

- Overall progress in numeracy is satisfactory. The attainment across the school and across classes is too variable. The school should work towards raising attainment and improving the progression in learning.

- In recent years the school has focussed on developing strong mental mathematics skills through numeracy and mathematics lessons. However the approaches in use are not yet showing a positive impact across the school. The staff should revisit these approaches to ensure consistency and a shared understanding by all staff.

- **Number** - Across the school most children are developing their skills well in the four processes. By the Second Level most children are demonstrating accuracy of recall and able articulate the strategies they are using to arrive at answers. The school should now consider how they can challenge pupils more in their learning and applying their skills in different contexts and real life situations.

- In planning for learning, staff should now consider ways to improve the effectiveness of differentiation in teacher led learning. There is considerable scope to raise expectations yet further.

- **Money** – Children are developing confidence in using money in calculations. Those at First Level are able to use their knowledge of money to solve problems. At Second Level children, with support, are able to use their knowledge of money and estimation in more complex tasks involving developing budgets.

- **Shape, position and movement**: At the Early Level most children are able to identify 2D shapes and 3D objects and reinforce this knowledge through games and building tasks. By First Level the majority can name vertices, corners and edges of common 3D objects.

- **Problem solving**: Across the school children would benefit from more regular and varied challenges which require them to apply their numeracy and mathematics knowledge.

Attainment over time

- The school has data that tracks children's attainment over time for literacy and numeracy using standardised assessments. Overall, most children are making appropriate progress in reading. Those children who have identified ASN, including EAL are making appropriate progress from their prior levels of achievement. Curriculum for Excellence data based on teacher judgements is not yet sufficiently robust and reliable.

- Moving forward staff should develop their approaches to moderation and develop consistent shared standards of expectations. This will, in turn, enable them to provide a higher level of challenge for all learners.

Overall quality of learners' achievement

- A few children in the school are beginning to develop skills for life and work through taking on roles such as the pupil council, Eco group, JRSOs and Junior Active Schools Co-ordinators. A majority of children are improving their physical wellbeing through engaging in extra-curricular clubs, with a particularly high number of girls involved in Scottish Country dance. They are increasing their confidence through participating in local festivals and have achieved success in areas such as hockey and Scottish Country Dance. A few children have achieved success in local and national competitions for arts and poetry.

- Children's achievements are increasingly being celebrated. The school is setting up a working group this session to take forward tracking the wider achievements of children. This needs to ensure it recognises the skills gained from these experiences and how these are built upon across their school career, and help children to understand and recognise the skills gained for learning, life and work. This also needs to address barriers to participation for children and take account of equity and inclusion.

Equity for all learners

- The school serves an area of Selkirk that has a growing level of diversity. All children in attendance are from homes in deciles 2 to 9. The headteacher has an awareness of the school demographics and how this relates to the Scottish Attainment Challenge.

- Staff are now at a stage of knowing more about the demographics of the school and its community and should use this knowledge and understanding of culture, language and any barriers or disadvantages to ensure all children are treated fairly and equally. The school needs more time to implement its systems to track equity of success and raise attainment for all children.

SCHOOL CHOICE OF QI 2.1 LEADERSHIP OF LEARNING

This indicator relates to leadership of improvements in learning and teaching. It highlights the importance of professional commitment to improving pedagogy through a range of approaches to career-long professional learning including collegiate working. It focuses on leadership which improves outcomes for learners through enabling them to lead their own learning. The themes are:

- *Professional engagement and collegiate working*
- *Impact of career-long professional learning*
- *Children and young people leading learning*

- The school has made a promising start to developing a learning culture amongst staff. All staff have opportunities and are actively encouraged and supported to engage in professional learning within school, with cluster colleagues and further afield. Time is prioritised in the collegiate calendar for staff to engage in professional dialogue and debate and to share practice and thinking. A useful next step would be to ensure that professional learning and dialogue focuses more directly on school improvement priorities. This will lead to more consistency in practice across the school and improved outcomes for children.

- All teachers are engaged actively in a practitioner enquiry project. This approach to professional learning was introduced in autumn 2016. Teachers selected their topic by evaluating their practice against key points they had identified as features of highly effective learning and teaching. Teachers are very positive and motivated by this approach. They will share and evaluate their project learning with peers in spring 2017. As identified by the school there is a need to develop a more collaborative approach with individuals working together more closely to take forward identified improvements. This will enhance teachers' learning with and from each other.

- Support staff meet regularly to talk about their practice, share ideas and engage in professional learning particular to their roles within school. These meetings are supported by the leadership team. Flexible arrangements are in place to allow support staff to attend relevant CLPL activities outwith usual working hours. During meetings with the inspection team support staff shared that they feel valued and well supported in their work. They are keen and enthusiastic to participate in further professional learning opportunities that are relevant to their work in the school.

- All staff access opportunities for professional learning through the school collegiate activity calendar and the local authority professional learning CLPL programme. An online professional learning programme is accessed by all staff and a number of mandatory e-learning modules are undertaken each session. There is scope to now improve approaches to gathering evidence which demonstrates the impact of individual and collective professional learning on learners and whole school improvement.

- The school is at an early stage of developing a culture of looking outwards to other schools within the local authority. Staff are supported to visit other schools and settings with a focus upon observing and learning from good practice. A useful next step would be to build on and develop further opportunities to learn with colleagues across different sectors and with partner agencies.

- A clear system for annual professional review and development is in place for all staff. Staff maintain online learning logs and are encouraged to evaluate the impact of CLPL activities on learners. A strong focus is placed upon self-evaluation using the GTCS Standards or criteria specific to particular support staff roles. A coaching approach is used to identify priorities for action. There is scope to now focus upon ensuring professional learning is having a direct, positive impact on pupil learning.

- The headteacher and her staff recognise the need to improve approaches to digital learning and teaching. Small steps have been taken towards embedding the use of digital technology across the curriculum. The school should now build upon this and improve access to a range of appropriate digital resources. There should be work undertaken with staff at all levels to improve digital literacy. A focus should be upon building confidence in staff around the learning and teaching of digital technology.

- The school has plans to introduce a working group to support children in the leading of their learning. They should now progress these plans to ensure all children have the opportunity to participate in relevant activities to lead learning. During focus groups children stated they would welcome more opportunities to lead their learning. As identified by the school there is a need to improve systems for recording children's leadership of their own and others' learning. This should include identifying and using strategies for involving parents.

- Through participation in the First Minister's Reading Challenge children in primaries four to seven are being encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning in setting themselves achievable targets and monitoring their progress towards meeting them. Children speak positively about this experience and are beginning to identify the skills needed to lead learning. There is scope to introduce similar approaches across the school and involving all children. This will support children in identifying their strengths and next steps in leading learning.

- Floor books are used to give children in the nursery opportunities to talk about activities and what they have learned. This is available for parents. Children would benefit from more support from practitioners to talk about and develop their interests and learning.

Section Two

Summarised Inspection Findings

Knowepark Primary School Nursery Class

1.3 LEADERSHIP OF CHANGE — weak

This indicator focuses on working together at all levels to develop a shared vision for change and improvement which reflects the context of the setting within in its community. Planning for continuous improvement change should be evidence-based and clearly linked to strong self-evaluation. Senior leaders should ensure that the pace of change is well judged and appropriate to have a positive impact on outcomes for children. The themes are:

- *Developing a shared vision, values and aims relevant to the setting and its community*
- *Strategic planning for continuous improvement*
- *Implementing improvement and change*

- This session, together with the school, nursery practitioners have worked together to contribute to refreshing the vision of the whole school. The head teacher has identified this as a key priority. This will establish a clear and shared direction to take forward and support improvement across the nursery and school.

- The nursery has undergone significant changes over the past year including moving to new premises within the school. This has had a negative impact on the pace of change and improvement. Constrained impact rather than negative?

- The depute head teacher visits the nursery and supports the nursery team at meetings. There is no formal routine monitoring of the nursery to support practitioners in recognising what is working well, areas for improvement and the impact of changes. Management now need to provide more effective leadership in monitoring the impact of changes and improve outcomes for children and families.

- Practitioners do not identify with their involvement in the whole school improvement plan. A self-evaluation activity, in December 2016, was used by practitioners to identify priorities for improvement. They have begun to implement changes, for example to improve partnership with parents and how they gather information about children's achievement and progress. These changes are at a very early stage, for example 'stay and play sessions with parents started during the inspection.

- Practitioners would benefit from support to make more use of national guidance, visits to other nurseries and opportunities to engage in professional dialogue to develop their knowledge and confidence. This will help them in developing their understanding of how children learn and support all practitioners in taking forward improvements.

- Practitioners should build on the positive formation of the team to further improve their skills and confidence in using self-evaluation frameworks to help them to regularly reflect on how well they are improving children's learning and experiences.

2.3 LEARNING, TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT — weak

This indicator focuses on ensuring high quality learning experiences for young children. It highlights the importance of a very good understanding of child development and early learning pedagogy. Effective use is made of observation to inform future learning and identify the progress made. Children are involved in planning for their own learning. Together these ensure children's successes and achievements are maximised. The themes are:

- *Learning and engagement*
- *Quality of interactions*
- *Effective use of assessment*
- *Planning, tracking and monitoring*

- Children benefit from positive relationships with practitioners who are responsive and kind in their interactions with them.

- All children have choice and space to explore during their play. The majority of children are confident in choosing where they want to play in the playroom and outdoor area. They enjoy exploring the range of experiences available. Younger children enjoy using pebbles and 'jewels' to fill and empty containers. In the best examples children spend extended periods of time drawing and cutting, making a range of shapes and objects from paper and working together to complete challenging jigsaws and build obstacle courses. In the outdoor area they enjoy playing alongside one another 'painting' with water and washing the scooters and trikes.

- Too often children do not sustain interest and engagement in learning. A minority of children regularly move from activity to activity and can become involved in boisterous behaviour. At other times the quality of play is diminished by the untidiness of the playroom. Resources are often left on the floor limiting opportunities for quality play for other children. Children are not being well enough supported to sustain their play and take forward their ideas.

- Since the move to the new premises in August the organisation of the playroom has evolved. During the session a significant portion of practitioner time is used to manage snack and help children get dressed for outdoor play. A review of the playroom and roles of practitioners will help them to engage children in purposeful play and learning. The challenges in managing the large playroom and outdoor area, particularly in the afternoon, when there are two practitioners, require consideration by practitioners and school management.

- Practitioner interactions with children are sensitive and reflect the positive relationships that have been established. Effective questioning techniques are not yet well developed resulting in opportunities not being taken to build on children's motivation and curiosity for learning. The use of higher order questioning would better support learning and help children to become more confident in talking about their learning and achievements.

- Practitioners have recently changed how they observe and assess children's learning. Observations have largely focussed on particular skills linked to the recently introduced early level skills trackers. The information gathered is limited. It

is not sufficiently helping practitioners to make sound judgements about the progress individual children are making in key areas and across a broad general education. Practitioners should develop their approaches to observation and assessment to enable them to record significant learning and use this information to identify opportunities for future learning for individual children to support progression.

- Children's interests, knowledge and views on activities are recorded in floor books. This provides a positive start to practitioners working together to build this into approaches to planning and providing more opportunities for children to lead their own learning.

- This session practitioners have begun to use early level trackers from nursery to the end of primary one. Arrangements for developing a shared understanding of expectations of children through moderation are not yet in place.

2.2 CURRICULUM: theme 2: Learning and Development Pathways

- Skills in early literacy and mathematics in the early level tracker have been used as a focus for planning and assessment. Practitioners map the range of experiences and outcomes linked to play activities. There is a need to ensure that children are able to develop progressive skills in key areas and across a broad general education and that experiences are planned to provide depth and challenge in learning.

- Children have regularly access to the outdoor area adjacent to the nursery. There are plans in place to develop and enhance this area. This will support the nursery team in maximising children's learning in the outdoor area.

- There is a clear focus on learning in the wider outdoor environment. Children spend extended time each week in the local Haining Estate. This provides rich opportunities to support health and wellbeing and learning across a range of area such as science.

- Children have some opportunities for developing skills in real life contexts. For example in making soup for snack. They need more support from practitioners to lead their learning and incorporate enterprising and creative approaches to engaging children in play and real life experiences linked to the world of work. The nursery have plans to make better use of partners to support children's learning about world of work.

- Further improve the use of digital technology to support children's learning.

3.1 ENSURING WELLBEING, EQUALITY AND INCLUSION	satisfactory

This indicator reflects on the setting's approach to children's wellbeing which underpins their ability to achieve success. It highlights the need for policies and practices to be well grounded in current legislation and a shared understanding of the value of each individual. A clear focus on wellbeing entitlements and protected characteristics supports all children to be the best they can be and celebrates their successes and achievements. The themes are:

- *Wellbeing*
- *Fulfilment of statutory duties*
- *Inclusion and equality*

- Children in the nursery are supported to become independent and make friends. Practitioners encourage children to co-operate and share toys during play. There is a welcoming ethos and parents speak highly of the commitment of practitioners to support their children within the nursery.

- Practitioners have undertaken training to support their understanding and use of GIRFEC wellbeing indicators. Supported by older pupils, practitioners have created a display to share with children and parents to promote wellbeing. Building on this positive start practitioners, should continue to work with children to support their understanding of wellbeing and raise awareness of their own and others' rights.

- Management need to ensure that statutory duties are consistently met. Care Plans are not yet in place for children. Care Plans should be in place for all children within 28 days of starting nursery and reviewed and updated every 6 months. The nursery provides access to 600 hours of early learning and childcare. Practitioners are registered with the SSSC.

- Practitioners use a behaviour management system to promote positive behaviour. At times a minority of children's behaviour was boisterous and disrupted the play and learning of others. Working with the management, practitioners need to review their current approaches and develop a shared understanding, strategies and expectations of behaviour in the nursery.

- Children in the nursery respond well to opportunities for responsibility, for example, when preparing snack. There is scope to further develop children's leadership skills including their responsibilities to others and their responsibilities in the play environment. This includes giving children more help to take responsibility for tidying and maintaining quality play environments.

- The daily opportunities for outdoor play and the weekly visit to Haining Estate provide very positive opportunities to promote wellbeing. The senior practitioner has developed the visits to the Haining Estate in recent months and is enthusiastic in continuing to take this forward.

- Where appropriate, advice and support is available for children whose first language is not English. Practitioners are aware of the need for individual plans for children with additional support needs.

- The nursery has established links with key partners such as Dental Health. Practitioners have identified the need to continue to seek and build partnerships with key agencies such as health visiting to ensure continuity of support for children and families.

- Practitioners are responsive to children's interests for example superheroes and Disney films. By incorporating elements like this within the playroom practitioners need to do more to ensure that they promote children's awareness of equality, diversity and inclusion issues through play.

3.2 SECURING CHILDREN'S PROGRESS — satisfactory

This indicator relates to the development and learning of babies, toddlers and young children. It requires clear understanding of early learning and development and pedagogy. It reflects the integrated way young children learn and the importance of experiences and development happening on an individual basis within a supportive, nurturing and stimulating environment. High quality early learning and childcare contributes significantly to enhancing children's progress and achievement as they grow and learn. It can benefit all children by closing the attainment gap and ensuring equity for all. It is about the holistic nature of development and learning ensuring these foundations are secure in order to achieve future attainment success. The themes are:

- *Progress in communication, early language, mathematics and health and wellbeing*
- *Children's progress over time*
- *Overall quality of children's achievement*
- *Ensuring equity for all children*

- Children are demonstrating appropriate skills in early literacy. Most children can talk about their favourite stories and recount main parts of familiar fairy tales. Most use books and enjoy listening to stories. In the outdoor area children use information texts and pictures to identify and name features in the local environment. At snack most recognise their name and a minority are making good attempts at writing their name. Children would benefit from a progressive approach to developing early literacy skills, such as rhyme, during play.

- In numeracy and maths children demonstrate appropriate skills. Children are developing an understanding of the properties of 3D objects using blocks to build castles and bridges. Most are confident in counting a small number of objects such as pine cones and pebbles. They enjoy filling and emptying containers and are beginning to use language such as full and empty during play. Practitioners recognise the need to improve approaches to develop children's skills in numeracy and early mathematics. They would benefit from working together to develop a deeper understanding of how children develop mathematical skills and use them in play activities.

- Almost all children are making progress in health and wellbeing. Children are developing appropriate physical skills in negotiating different terrains in the outdoor area. They work together to create obstacle courses to practice and demonstrate good balancing skills. Children are becoming confident in talking about risks and ways in which they can manage them in the outdoor area. With support, the majority of children are beginning to use tools such as scissors with increasing skill and confidence. Children would benefit from a wider range of visitors, visits and real life experiences to support their understanding of the world of work and enterprise.

- Children are confident in talking about the seasonal changes in their local area during walks and can identify and name common mini beasts. Most children enjoy pretend play in 'making food' and exploring vegetable during role play. They enjoy dressing up and are creative in using props to create characters.

- Every child has a profile and these are available within the playroom and shared with parents. These are not routinely used by practitioners and children as a way of recording and sharing their learning journey. Practitioners are beginning to gather

information about children's achievements at home and outwith the nursery. These should now be built into children's profiles and used to continue learning at nursery.

- Practitioners have begun to change the information they gather about children's learning. Profiles do not yet show the progress children are making in key areas of learning. Practitioners recognise the need to continue to improve these to better show the progress children are making. This will help practitioners, parents and children talk about children's experiences and learning, celebrate progress both in the nursery and at home and agree next steps in learning.

- Standardised tests are implemented at the start of primary one. Management and practitioners do not yet make use of this information to reflect on and improve children's learning and outcomes in the nursery.

- With management support practitioners need to gather and make better use of information and data to identify and develop approaches to early intervention to reduce challenges faced by children.

PARTICULAR STRENGTHS OF THE SCHOOL

- The focus of the headteacher in changing the culture of the school to bring about a welcoming ethos and create a sense of community for children, parents and partners.
- Through the support of the senior management team, the willingness of staff to engage in professional learning and improve parental and partner engagement sustained throughout the school year.
- Polite, friendly children who value their friendships and school community.

AGREED AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT FOR THE SCHOOL

- In consultation with the school community, refresh the vision, values and aims of the school and nursery class to bring about a clear direction and ensure continuous improvement.
- Improve the consistency of high quality learning, teaching and assessment across the school. Review the playroom environment of the nursery class to facilitate more effective learning and teaching.
- Through meeting the wellbeing, inclusion and learning needs of all children raise attainment at the primary stages and secure greater progress for children in the in the nursery class.

WHAT HAPPENS AT THE END OF THE INSPECTION?

We will liaise with Scottish Borders Council regarding the school's capacity to improve. We will return to carry out a further inspection of the school. We will discuss with Scottish Borders Council the details of this inspection. When we return to inspect the school we will write to you as parents/carers informing you of the progress the school has made.