

29 April 2025

Dear Parent/Carer

In February 2025, a team of inspectors from Education Scotland visited Cuiken 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 newly-appointed headteacher has focused rightly on improving the quality of learning and teaching across the school and unit. She has implemented guidance, which is supporting staff effectively to develop a consistent approach to planning at all stages.
- Staff foster positive relationships with all children. This promotes the supportive ethos across the school, unit and nursery. Children have a strong sense of belonging to the 'Cuiken Family' as a result.
- Children are making good progress in writing at first level. They show strong technical skills and write interesting texts for the reader.
- In the nursery, practitioners' interactions are highly responsive and meet children's needs well.

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

- In the unit, teachers need to plan learning experiences that take greater account of children's individual strengths and barriers to learning. They need to improve their approaches to learning to ensure lessons engage all children more effectively and build appropriately on what children can already do.
- In the school, teachers need to raise their expectations of what children can do. They should use assessment information better to plan lessons with increased pace and challenge. This should support teachers to continue to increase the progress children make to improve children's attainment in literacy and numeracy.
- In the nursery, practitioners should improve further the quality of their observations. This should help them plan experiences with a clearer focus on the skills they want children to learn.

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 Cuiken 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	good
Securing children's progress	good
Descriptions of the evaluations are available from: How good is our early learning and childcare? Appendix 1: The six-point scale	

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

[Cuiken Primary School | Inspection Report | Education Scotland](#)

What happens next?

We are confident that the school has the capacity to continue to improve and so we will make no more visits in connection with the school and nursery. We will ask Midlothian Council for a report on progress on the unit with the agreed areas for improvement within one year of the publication of this letter. Taking account of the progress report, we will then decide whether further engagement with the unit is required. This may involve another inspection visit. Midlothian Council will also write to you detailing the improvements the school has made and outlining any further action that we intend to take, as agreed with Midlothian Council.

Gillian Frew
HM Inspector