

# Summarised inspection findings

**Hermitage Park Primary School**

**The City of Edinburgh Council**

**SEED No: 5525128**

**14 November 2017**

## Key contextual information

The Headteacher has been in post for almost five years. In that time there has been a significant change in staff including those in promoted posts. The acting DHT and both acting PTs are recently appointed to their roles.

### 1.3 Leadership of change

very good

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 of change is a major strength in ensuring the school's continuous improvement. The strengths in the headteacher's leadership have a significantly positive impact on the school's supportive ethos and what it wants to achieve for children. The headteacher is confident in her role and systematically leads change and school improvement. She is clear about her vision for the school and sets clear expectations. The leadership team, including the recently appointed acting depute headteacher (DHT) and acting principal teachers (PT) have detailed management remits and work well together to support staff. Going forward, they should now make clear what their respective roles are in leading the school's strategic vision and aims. Staff contribute very well to leadership of the school's priorities for improvement. This is leading to successes for children in a wide range of achievements, wellbeing and learning experiences. They take active leadership roles that have led to improvements in physical education, music, numeracy and mathematics, pupil committees and wider achievements including a wide range of clubs for children. Children are increasingly aware of what they need to do to be successful, have a voice in improving the school and take pride in their achievements. Very good progress is being made in giving children a voice. They are fully involved in decisions made about their school and are successful in leading a growing range of responsibilities.
- The school's values are understood and founded on equalities and fairness. This is a strong feature of the school which is recognised by parents and children. The headteacher is committed in her role and ensures continuous improvement is sustained through wide consultation on the work of the school. The headteacher and staff know the school and its community well and have fostered positive links over a period of several years. The headteacher continues to be responsive to the needs of the diverse local population and has a strong focus on achieving the best for all children. This leads to a vision that is continually evolving and building on the strengths of the school. The school should refresh its vision as planned.
- The headteacher has judged the pace of change well and has gained the respect of the school community. Building on its positive relationships, the school should continue to involve parents as fully as possible in the life and work of the school so that no barriers

prevent parents from playing a full part in their children's learning. A wide range of partners are positive about their involvement with the school. The school should now consider ways in which partners can be more fully included in self-evaluation leading to school improvement.

- The headteacher has had a sustained focus on attendance which has improved significantly. She systematically gathers evidence to demonstrate the school's improvements. The leadership team is becoming systematic in its leadership and management of financial resources with the long term aim of new initiatives leading to improvement. They should now outline the ways in which the impact of new posts to reduce the attainment gap will be measured. Professional enquiry and action research methodologies involving the Educational Psychologist should be considered.
- Improvement planning and priorities are evaluated regularly and progress made is tracked systematically. Self-evaluation is based on a growing range of robust evidence. The headteacher and staff regularly review curriculum planning and have taken effective steps to streamline this. The school's moderation and self-evaluation framework is comprehensive and provides a range of approaches that demonstrate the staff team's involvement in, and commitment to self-improvement. The headteacher and staff should continue to develop rigorous self-evaluation using national benchmarks across a growing range of curriculum areas and continue to look outwards to learn from and share good practice. The headteacher and staff have a well-established cycle of improvement planning and evaluation of standards which is well placed to be aligned to the National Improvement Framework and to involve children and parents in this. The school's capacity to continually improve is high.

## 2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

good

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

- Children are motivated, enjoy learning and work well together. There is an appropriate focus on children's rights and responsibilities. This is supported through well-considered classroom charters in every classroom based on the school motto 'be kind, be fair'. During inspection observations there was a positive whole school ethos with most learners well behaved and polite. Staff should use the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child work to develop this area further.
- In most classes, the quality of learning and teaching is good. Tasks and activities are differentiated well and matched to the needs of most learners. Most children are attentive, even in classes where learning and teaching was less effective. A few children have difficulty sustaining their concentration. This can be improved through the provision of brisker paced and more challenging tasks.
- Most children demonstrate they are well focussed and independent learners who learn well in groups. They enjoy taking extra responsibilities including supporting other younger learners. There are positive examples of learners offering one another high quality feedback. This should be developed further to enable every child to lead their learning. Personal learning plans (PLP) enable children in mathematics, physical education and writing to celebrate their latest and best work and discuss next steps for learning. Senior leaders understand the need to continue developing these plans to ensure consistency of assessment across all subjects.
- There are a few outstanding examples of digital learning including how it is used to support those children with additional needs. These should be shared with all staff to enable them to increase confidence and improve skills. The school should consider placing more computers into classrooms alongside hand held devices already in place, to enable digital learning to be linked to skills being developed in class more effectively.
- Most teachers are motivated and provide clear, helpful instructions to their classes. They provide a wide variety of teaching techniques including direct teaching and self-and peer-assessment. They scaffold learning well to ensure success. Teachers also use high quality, written feedback to help inform learners of their next steps in learning. Jotter work has helpful prompts to enable learners to be clear about their short-term targets. There are examples of high quality teaching and all staff should aspire to reach these high standards. Continued development is needed to ensure all staff are consistent in sharing clear learning targets to support children's understanding of the skills they are developing. In classes where children have clear targets, they demonstrate a clear understanding of what their next

steps are. Children respond well when teachers offer active approaches to learning, including the use of practical tasks and group discussions.

- Teachers plan learning using well-crafted yearly learning plans which help inform clear manageable shorter term learning plans. They plan well for daily lessons, avoiding bureaucracy and taking account of children's progress. Learners are involved in longer term planning through working with their teacher to decide learning themes based on experiences and outcomes. The school understands the need to continue this strong practice.
- Staff use a variety of assessment strategies to support learning and analyse standards including a wide range of standardised assessments. Until recently, the school has used significant aspects of learning to inform teaching and enable staff to have a clear understanding of children's development. Assessment strategies should be developed by all staff at the planning stage and then used well during each lesson. This is not yet consistent across the school. Staff are developing children's use of higher order thinking skills and as a result most children speak well about the skills they are acquiring.
- Staff use a well-considered broad range of tools to assess and diagnose children with barriers to their learning. Staff have gathered robust evidence on how well the school is improving the attainment. Their use of numeracy interventions is enabling the school to demonstrate improvements in mathematics attainment overall.
- There is a strategic and consistent approach to the assessment of literacy and numeracy. Further work is now needed to develop more formal assessment methods to track listening and talking. Staff complete regular literacy and numeracy assessments providing up-to-date data on progress across the school. Moderation is completed with stage partners and supports teacher judgements about Curriculum for Excellence levels.
- Teachers have regular helpful tracking and monitoring meetings focussing on overall class attainment and the analysis of data. Staff now need to complete further work for each child's individual progress at their level rather than focus solely on the progress of a particular group of learners. Further work is also needed to develop assessment procedures beyond the teaching of literacy and numeracy.
- Additional planning and monitoring is in place for most learners who experience additional challenges such as, looked after children and those experiencing disadvantages. Individualised educational programmes (IEPs) are supported well with progress jotters. The clarity of the purpose of the progress jotters will be improved by making the links to the IEP clearer. Staff issue regular detailed reports to parents enabling them to support learning improvement.

## 2.2 Curriculum: Learning Pathways

- The school has a clear rationale for the development of curriculum pathways based on the school's vision and aims and Curriculum for Excellence. Teachers agree that the present topic-based learning needs further development to ensure progressive courses at all levels are delivered, especially in areas such as science, social studies and religious and moral education. Expressive arts pathways are progressing well.
- The school's interdisciplinary learning (IDL) framework includes a helpful, generic skills-based toolkit at each level. In most classes, IDL pathways are developed taking account of children's interests and ideas and offer elements of personalisation and choice. Outdoor learning is at an early stage of development and staff are working well to improve the present provision. Good progress is being made through children's involvement in the grounds for awareness initiative.
- Staff and children work well with a wide range of partners including parents. As a result children are developing important skills for learning, life and work well. As the school continues to develop its approaches to partnership working, it is important to ensure activities at all levels are planned well across the four contexts of learning.
- Well considered health and wellbeing pathways are delivered through a whole school programme that includes sexual health and building resilience. Staff need to develop the 1+2 modern language provision further. Although progressive courses are in place, staff need to ensure they provide more engaging, relevant and challenging language pathways as outlined in the school's policy.
- Transitions at all points in the primary are developing well.

## 2.7 Partnerships: Impact on learners - Parental Engagement

- The parents in focus groups and those who responded to the questionnaire are overall very positive about the school. They feel children have good relationships with their teachers and are well supported at school. Parents are positive about communication to and from the school and feel the school is approachable should any issues arise.
- Parents like the way homework is managed and the flexibility they have about when it needs to be completed.
- Information within written pupil progress reports provide parents with accurate information on children's progress. However, parents would welcome clearer indication about assessment and Curriculum for Excellence levels. Parents are appreciative of the weekly newsletters and the information posted on the school website. The school should consider how it can make use of other digital platforms to ensure as many parents as possible can access school information.
- A range of partners work well with parents resulting in their increased involvement. Senior staff recognise the importance of engaging all parents and have facilitated a number of events to include as many parents as possible. The school should continue to ensure all families are encouraged and participate as widely as possible to support their children's 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. At the time of the inspection, there were no identified areas for development.



### 3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion

good

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

- The school has established an environment which promotes and supports the wellbeing of children, staff and families. All staff are clear about their responsibilities and roles in relation to the wellbeing of all children. The school ensures all staff have suitable opportunities for training to build their confidence and skills in particular areas of health and wellbeing. The combination of a physical education specialist and class teachers delivering two hours of physical education is leading to improvements in children's skills and learning.
- Staff in the school have a good understanding of the wellbeing of children and the wellbeing indicators are implicit within school policies, in classroom practice and in school assemblies. Children have worked together to discuss wellbeing and what it means to them. Children use a variety of appropriate terms to describe their feelings and associated activities under the wellbeing indicators. There should now be more explicit references made to the wellbeing indicators within classrooms in order to ensure children become familiar with the language of wellbeing.
- The school has run well-attended parent workshops on the Relationships, Sexual Health and Parenthood programme. This helped to alleviate parental concerns around the programme content and provides an opportunity for parents to support their child's learning at home by using consistent terminology.
- The school is aware of the need to develop a strategic overview of the health and wellbeing needs of the school's community to develop aspects of the health and wellbeing programme. Further planning is required to ensure progression in children's learning across all areas of health and wellbeing. The school should continue to make increased use of partners in planning, delivering and evaluating their inputs and the impact on children.
- Partners who work regularly with the school are positive about their experiences and the improved engagement with children in their work.
- Children are happy at school and relationships with teachers are very positive. There is a caring ethos across the school and staff know the needs of children well. Most children are polite and well behaved and are confident when speaking with adults. They are learning about resilience and their emotions and how to apply their learning in the wider environment such as the playground and beyond. Most children are included and engage well in their learning. The school should continue to seek effective strategies for staff in

ensuring they manage the challenges faced by a few individual children well. Senior staff are taking appropriate action to ensure all children are fully included.

- The voice of pupils is strong in many areas of school life and children are enthusiastic about their experience of choices within classes. They are involved in choosing topics and teachers support this to increase the engagement and involvement of children. Children are voted by their peers to become members of various committees, such as fair trade and eco committees.
- The school improvement plan identifies the need to improve children's health and wellbeing and staff should now take steps to measure the improvements in this area. The school recognises the value of developing nurturing approaches to help support a few children who find it a challenge to settle in class.
- Senior staff are fully aware of the legislative requirements of meeting learners' needs and have made appropriate arrangements to ensure children's needs are tracked and monitored. They have agreed that a simplified and more streamlined system to communicate with class teachers would be helpful. The school has helpful policies to promote equalities, anti-bullying and diversity. The school is meeting the duties under the Health Promotion and Nutrition (HPN) Act. However there is scope to review the management of the dining hall to ensure a balanced level of adult supervision between the playground and hall during lunchtimes. The school should consider how it can ensure children are taking sufficient time to eat the lunch they have selected and reduce the high level of food waste.
- Almost all teachers have a holistic knowledge and understanding of the children. They are well informed of additional support needs of individuals. Senior staff should now streamline and simplify the school's range of record keeping to provide a clearer strategic overview of all support needs. In so doing, targets should be specific, shared as appropriate with staff, parents and the individual child and link directly to the barrier to learning.
- Most pupil support assistants provide effective support in classes. There is scope for school leaders to review the deployment of support staff to ensure all learning needs are met as effectively as possible. Children with English as an additional language are supported well by class teachers. However, their progress should be closely monitored to make sure they access all areas of the curriculum well. Professional learning in autistic spectrum disorder is leading to effective provision and support for children in class.
- Staff have information relating to the differing socio economic backgrounds of children and have all been trained in a child poverty programme supporting their understanding of the causes, scale and impact of poverty. This will support teachers in working towards improving attainment for learners and making effective use of the Pupil Equity Fund.

### 3.2 Raising attainment and achievement

good

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

#### Overall attainment in literacy and numeracy

- Attainment data provided by the school, is based on teachers' professional judgements. This is supported by standardised assessments, moderation and ongoing professional dialogue with promoted staff. From the data provided for 2016/2017, most children achieved expected levels in literacy across the school. Overall, most children achieved appropriate levels of attainment in numeracy. Further work in developing robust teacher judgements is required, particularly at the early level. The planned use of the benchmarks for literacy and numeracy will help support this.

#### Attainment in literacy and English

##### Attainment in Literacy:

- Overall, attainment in literacy and English language is good. Most children in P1, P4 and P7 are on track to achieve appropriate Curriculum for Excellence levels at the end of the school year. There is scope to develop a shared understanding of assessment and skills progressions for listening and talking across the school.

##### Listening & Talking:

- Overall, most children are making good progress in listening and talking. Across the school most children listen well to teachers and one another. They work confidently in pairs and small groups. Most children in P1 listen and respond appropriately when following instructions about their learning. By P4, children select and share information using a variety of vocabulary. By P7, most children collaborate well in groups, consider the details that support key ideas and show empathy and respect for one another's ideas.

##### Reading:

- Overall, most children are making good progress in reading. They engage well with a range of texts across learning and regularly select books for their personal reading, including through their regular timetabled visits to the school library. They enjoy the school's focus on reading challenges. Children at the early level use their knowledge of sounds, letters and patterns to read a variety of common words with growing confidence. By P4, children talk knowledgably about their favourite authors and books. They can distinguish between fiction and non-fiction. By P7, most children scan unfamiliar texts to select key vocabulary and predict what may happen next within a story.

### **Writing:**

- Overall, most children are making good progress in writing. Across the school, digital resources are used well to support the development of writing skills. At the early level, children are developing skills forming letters legibly and using capital letters and full stops to punctuate their texts. By P4, most children organise their writing in paragraphs, start sentences in a variety of ways and write in a range of genres. By P7, most children write for a range of purposes across the curriculum and use appropriate language to suit the purpose and audience. They are successfully developing their editing skills to refine, redraft and improve writing.

### **Attainment in numeracy and mathematics:**

- Overall, most children are making good progress in mathematics and numeracy. They are developing problem solving skills and apply them in a range of different contexts. There is scope to further develop children's skills in algebraic reasoning in the upper stages of primary. Most children in P1, P4, and P7 are on track to achieve the appropriate Curriculum for Excellence levels by the end of the school year. The majority of P2, and most of the children at P3 are on track to achieve first level by the end of P4. Most P5 and P6 children are on track to achieve second level by the end of P7.

### **Number, money, measure:**

- Across the school, children are developing their mental agility skills through a range of learning approaches. By the start of P2, most children sequence numbers to 20 and can add accurately within 10. By the start of P5, most children add confidently with two digits and can find simple fractions of an amount. They round to the nearest ten accurately and are exploring division strategies. At P6, a few are now exploring negative numbers. At P7, children identify factors and are investigating the difference between factors and multiples.
- At P2, most children are able to identify a range of coins. At P4, children use coins to find totals and calculate change from £1.
- At P2, most children continue patterns and can sequence and identify the seasons of the year. By P5, children are confident in identifying information from calendars. By P7, children interpret timetables.
- Children in P1 use everyday objects to find the lengths of items. At P4, children measure lines in centimetres and have explored standard units. By P7, children have explored a range of number patterns.

### **Shape, position and movement:**

- At P2, most children can complete simple symmetrical pictures. Children across the school can identify 3D objects and their properties as appropriate to their stage. By P7, children identify the properties of a circle and have an understanding of different types of angle. Children in the upper stages of primary use grid references accurately.

### **Information handling:**

- At P1, children construct simple bar graphs. By P5, children extract information to construct bar and line graphs. By P7, children use a range of diagrams to organise information. Children at P4 and P7 demonstrate an understanding of chance and uncertainty though there is scope to develop this further.

### **Attainment over time in literacy and numeracy:**

- The school systematically tracks children's attainment in literacy and numeracy over time. Staff have gathered evidence over several years from a range of standardised assessment. They analyse and use this information to identify learners who are attaining well and those who are not attaining expected levels. The school has interventions in place to support these children. This information is used in conjunction with Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation data to identify an attainment gap at all stages of the school.
- The school has identified an improving pattern of attainment in numeracy as children move through stages. Staff have identified the numeracy intervention programme as the key driver for this success. In literacy, the school has correctly identified a decrease in attainment at early and first level. It is developing a revised approach to the learning, teaching and assessment of literacy to support the delivery of high quality experiences for all children.
- Regular tracking meetings between teachers and senior leaders have an increasing focus on children's progress. Teachers engage in moderation of their professional judgements within the school and with cluster schools.

### **Overall quality of learners' achievement:**

- Children's achievements are a major strength across the school. Children enjoy contributing to the life of the school and actively demonstrate the four capacities of Curriculum for Excellence. Children are confident when talking about their school and demonstrate a clear pride for their school and their successes.
- There is a well-embedded, whole school culture which recognises, shares and celebrates the achievements of children with the wider school community. Whole school awards have raised children's awareness of environmental issues and encouraged participation in initiatives. These help children to understand how they can influence and support change at a local, national and international level.
- The school has recently reviewed how it helps children to share their achievements and gain a better understanding of the skills they are developing. The school has yet to collate and analyse achievements of children to ensure equity of opportunity for all learners and to identify potential barriers to children achieving. The school monitors participation in activities. However, a more rigorous approach would ensure they are able to identify any children who do not participate and minimise any barriers to this.
- The school offers a wide range of opportunities to develop interests of children at all stages. There are strong group and individual performances in sports, music and dance. Across the school there is a high level of participation by children in sports festivals and competitive events. The school has achieved sportscotland School Sport award at silver level. At the time of the inspection, the school was awaiting confirmation of its outstanding achievement of the gold level award. The school is the first in Scotland to achieve a level three 'School of Cooperation' award.
- Children are involved in school groups and are clear about their roles and remits as representatives of their peers. The Pupil Council is working with Grounds for Learning to bring about improvements in their playground. Children are learning to listen to and take the views of others into account, particularly when they differ from their own views.

- The school has identified a gap in attainment at all stages within the school. It has identified those children in each class who require additional support and are working to remove any barriers to learning. Most staff are aware of the socio-economic context of the school and are working to engage with children and their families to support their learning.
- The school has outlined its proposed use of the Pupil Equity Funding. This includes enhancing learning environments and providing additional staffing to support parents to engage with their children's learning. The school should ensure it has plans in place to monitor and evaluate the impact of these interventions through professional enquiry.

## School choice of QI :2.4 Personalised Support

- **Theme 1- Universal support**
- **Theme 2- Targeted support**
- **Theme 3- Removal of barriers to learning**

- The strength of the school in this aspect of its work is having a significantly positive impact on learners. The headteacher sets high expectations of staff and supports them well through effective systematic approaches to tracking and monitoring of children's progress. This includes tracking of absences. Children across the school are confident and staff encourage them to do their best. In most lessons, teachers plan tasks and activities that meet the needs of children well.
- Relationships in all classes are positive and children have a voice in decisions which affect them. All children are involved in aspects of choice within classrooms and those we spoke to explained they like being asked about what they wanted to learn. Whilst there is some evidence of learning conversations in some classes, staff should work together to develop strategies consistently across the school. The 'Bonus ball' initiative is a strong feature of the importance the school places on sharing learning and success.
- Children are learning skills for learning, life and work through purposeful of class tasks and school activities. Across the school, there is a need to improve consistency in how learners lead their own learning. The school has identified the need to further develop PLPs to help improve this aspect.
- Children's needs are identified at an early stage and appropriate assessment and review meetings are well managed and planned. Most parents are fully involved in these processes.
- Children with additional support needs are supported well through a variety of approaches to planning for their needs. Senior staff recognise the need to streamline and simplify plans to make sure they are easily understood and progress tracked as effectively as possible.
- The headteacher has a very good understanding of the school's demographics. She has consulted widely on ways in which the school can remove any barriers to learning. There is a strong focus on ensuring equity of success is an outcome for all learners. The school staff work closely with a wide variety of supportive partner agencies to support the wide range of needs. Targeted support is leading to success for most learners. The school continues to find effective ways to reduce its exclusions and to become a fully inclusive school where all children achieve to their full potential.



## **Section Two**

### **Summarised Inspection Findings**

#### **Hermitage Park Primary School Nursery Class**



## Key contextual information

The nursery is placed in a purpose built extension to the original school building. The facilities provide a good sized playroom, sensory room and secure, walled garden space. The nursery offers flexible early learning and childcare places over the week, three hour ten min am/pm, four hours am/pm Mon-Thurs and two full days (eight hours) either Mon/Tues or Wed/Thurs.

### 1.3 Leadership of change

good

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 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.

- The whole school's values are understood and founded on equalities and fairness. The headteacher is committed in her role and ensures continuous improvement is sustained through wide consultation on the work of the school. The headteacher and practitioners know the school and its community well and have fostered positive links over a period of several years.
- Practitioners report they receive good support from the leadership team. They visit the nursery, undertake planned playroom visits and attend nursery team meetings. The newly appointed principal teacher has responsibility for developing and monitoring the work of the nursery and developing progression across the early level. This session, parents are being consulted on a range of 'big questions' about the quality of their children's early learning. This approach should continue to be developed to support a more focused approach to improvement which will allow aspects for change to be monitored more effectively.
- Practitioners strive to do their best for children and their families. In partnership with practitioners, the newly established leadership team have started to provide guidance for the direction of change in the nursery. They are developing as reflective practitioners. They engage in professional dialogue and share their skills to help make improvements. Members of the team are encouraged to take on a leadership role for initiatives linked to nursery developments. As a result, improvements are being made across the curriculum and particularly in outdoor learning opportunities.
- Practitioners access a useful range of professional learning opportunities to support their knowledge and practice. They should now be supported to reflect further on the quality of their provision and practice, developing a shared vision on how best to support children's learning, based on best practice. Focused visits to other early years settings will be beneficial.

- The school improvement plan includes priorities which impact on the nursery class. There is evidence of the impact on learning through the development of outdoor play. Practitioners are at the early stage of developing French as an additional language topic.

## 2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

good

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 are happy, safe, secure and developing confidence within the setting. Individual children receive a warm welcome. The majority of children are engaged and enjoy learning through child led play. They are developing their independence and beginning to take responsibility for aspects of their learning. Children are well supported by practitioners who know them well and recognise their emotional and developmental needs. Children make choices and select materials to develop their creativity and play from the quality resources both indoors and outdoors. Practitioners engage effectively with children using questioning skills and building on their prior knowledge. Children share their knowledge and experiences, talking confidently to practitioners and each other.
- The nursery is structured to provide a broad range of learning experiences which reflect children's interests and help to engage and sustain their interest. Children's views are listened to and practitioners plan the support for these interests well. Practitioners are at the early stage of developing responsive planning and now need to provide more opportunities indoors to deepen children's learning and provide increased challenge.
- Outdoor learning is a key priority across the school and nursery, with a focus on the development of high quality learning experiences planned in context. The current developments are supporting children to become more confident while learning in a variety of ways when using the well-resourced garden space. Loose parts play has enhanced the provision and increased opportunities for children to problem solve and use materials in creative ways. Planned further developments to increase literacy and numeracy activities will help to enrich this area further.
- Practitioners are sensitive to children's engagement in their play and use a flexible approach to avoid disrupting quality play for more adult-led activities. There is an appropriate balance between time children spend choosing activities and time spent in group activity. Practitioners should build further opportunities to include children in decision making activities, encouraging them to talk about and reflect on their learning regularly.
- Practitioners assess children's learning through play. They observe children, interact with them and record information using floor books and individual personal learning profiles. Key observations help to evidence the children's learning journey and identify some next steps in learning. Practitioners track children's progress in core areas of the curriculum and now need to consider progress across the wider curriculum, recording their observations regularly.

## 2.2 Curriculum: Learning and development pathways

- The early learning curriculum is firmly embedded in play. Practitioners have a clear understanding of play and learning and have developed a responsive learning environment.
- Children's interests are supported by a range of seasonal topics and festivals which help to provide an overall broad curriculum base for their learning.
- Practitioners would benefit from using national guidance to help them to continue to review the learning environment to promote increased challenge and the development of children's skills. Practitioners should continue to develop their shared understanding of early learning pedagogy to further enhance the learning environment to offer rich learning experiences for all children, including access to a wider range of natural materials.
- Practitioners plan for daily outdoor learning experiences and continue to explore how best to use this space to support learning across the curriculum. They access the nearby woodland with children but there is scope to make more effective use of the local community to support learning. Children make effective use of a small range of digital technologies to extend their learning. Digital learning needs to be used across a wider range of experiences to help children develop their skills.
- Information on children's progress is shared with the P1 teachers in the school. Appropriate pastoral arrangements to support children moving from nursery to P1 are in place for most children. Practitioners have started to review how they use information about children's progress and interests to support improved continuity and progression in learning for those starting school. The new management team remits will help to support the continuity across the early level.

## 2.7 Partnerships: Impact on children and families - parental engagement

- Practitioners have worked well to establish strong links with parents and carers. Parents are valued as partners and encouraged to become involved in the setting in a variety of ways. They share their views to support improvement and evaluate specific aspects of the provision. Practitioners work with families to improve the learning environment, such as the recent work in the nursery garden. Parents are also invited to share their skills and cultures to support the curriculum and enrich children's learning.
- Parents are kept informed about their child's learning in a range of ways. They have access to their child's PLPs and are able to make contributions. A home lending library has been set up for families to access and the nursery's travelling bear encourages parents to share in their child's learning. As planned, practitioners should seek to build on and expand these learning links between home and nursery.
- Children benefit from the setting's engagement with a range of partners. For example, recent work with the local park ranger has enhanced children's outdoor learning and work with a storyteller led to positive impact on children's literacy experiences. As planned, practitioners should continue to build on their links with local partners in order to support and develop children's learning.
- Parents are encouraged to engage in nursery activities and contribute to their children's personal learning profiles. Practitioners value parents' contributions and aim to encourage participation in a wider range of nursery activities. Parents who attend family learning (Peers Early Education Partnership) classes speak positively on the impact the input has on supporting children's learning and transitions. Practitioners are proactive in engaging early with families, organise home visits before a child starts nursery and offer a range of parent support groups and activities.

## 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. At the time of the inspection, there were no identified areas for development.

### 3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion

good

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.

- There is a clear focus on promoting wellbeing for all children and families within the setting. Practitioners have made getting to know each family at the time of initial transition a priority in order to create positive partnerships and build relationships. This has led to a climate of mutual trust and a sense of community.
- Practitioners have established a positive environment for learning where children are settled, valued and respected as individuals. The promotion of children's wellbeing is central to the work of the setting and understood as the foundation for lifelong learning. As a result, children are supported to feel safe, healthy, active, nurtured, achieving, respected, responsible and included. On almost all occasions, practitioners successfully model this through kind, empathetic and respectful interactions. It will now be useful for the team to agree a shared approach to all aspects of their practice in order for this to be consistently applied.
- Positive behaviour is promoted in the setting through nurturing children's self-esteem and their relationships with each other. Practitioners encourage the building of early friendships between children and support them to negotiate during play. As a result, most children are respectful of each other and able to work together, appropriate to their stage of development. Children's emerging understanding of emotions and feelings is skilfully explored and built on through discussion and use of stories.
- Each child is recognised as an individual with their own needs, rights and attributes. Practitioners know each child well and value their contributions to the life of the setting. Children show good levels of independence in the environment and their choices are respected by practitioners. They encourage participation in daily routines, planning of learning and seek children's views on matters affecting them. We have asked practitioners to continue build on this positive start to strengthening the children's voice and opportunities for early leadership within the setting.
- Practitioners are reflective, motivated and keen to develop their practice in order to continue to improve outcomes for children and families. They work together effectively to meet the varying needs of children attending the setting and value time for professional dialogue. Practitioners have a good understanding of important developments in early learning and childcare in order that they fulfil their statutory duties. Care is planned for in a way that prioritises wellbeing and secures positive outcomes for all. We have asked practitioners to continue to develop a few of their processes to ensure plans for children's learning are consistently recorded and reflect development and progress over time. This

will be particularly important when monitoring the impact of plans for children who require additional support with their learning.

- The diversity and individuality of families attending the setting is valued by practitioners who understand their role in promoting inclusion and equity. Differences are viewed positively and help to develop children's understanding of the world and support their learning. As planned, practitioners should now continue to develop their approaches to learning from the nursery community to enrich children's learning and promote celebration of diversity.



### 3.2 Securing children's progress

good

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.

- Most children are making good progress in early literacy. Practitioners interact well with children during free play to extend children's communication and early language skills. Most children are showing a keen interest in mark-making and enjoy sharing their 'writing' with adults and one another. A few children enjoy sharing books independently and almost all children listen with interest to stories during group activity. It will be important for practitioners to ensure children continue to develop these skills through meaningful contexts indoors and during outdoor learning.
- Most children are progressing well in early numeracy and can count when playing with increasing confidence. They use wooden numbered stepping stones enthusiastically outside to count as they step and jump along. Children are developing good early mathematical skills through the range of toys and resources available. Most children are beginning to use appropriate mathematical language as they compare the size, length and capacity of blocks when playing outside and creating large constructions. Practitioners now need to continue to support children to develop early numeracy and mathematical skills through real-life contexts.
- In health and wellbeing children are making good progress. Practitioners provide a supportive ethos in the setting and encourage children to be caring, kind and respectful to others. Children are learning about healthy foods and lifestyles. Most children enjoy taking part in a regular 'mini mile' and regular outside activity. Practitioners plan regular woodland outdoor experiences which engage the children in active play and learning in a natural environment.
- Children's individual achievements within the nursery are captured and celebrated well. Praise is used effectively to support and encourage children and to celebrate their success. Achievements from home are starting to be shared through the personal learning profiles. There is scope for children to contribute to wider school initiatives for example, Pupil Council, Eco-Schools. Practitioners should continue to explore ways to celebrate and share children's achievements with parents and the wider school community.
- Practitioners work hard to develop a supportive and inclusive ethos. They are proactive in identifying potential barriers to learning.

## Setting choice of QI : 2.4 Personalised Support

- **Universal Support**
- **Role of practitioners and leaders**
- **Identification of learning needs and targeted support**  
**Removal of barriers to learning**

- Children's interests and needs are at the centre of the setting's planning processes. Recent developments to improve responsive planning methods have helped practitioners to take account of children's experiences, ideas and individual ways of learning. As these approaches develop, it will be important to focus on ensuring appropriate support, depth and challenge across the curriculum.
- The setting's keyworker system enables practitioners to respond well to the individual needs of children. They know each child well and use this knowledge to tailor their interactions and build strong relationships. Practitioners take full account of the particular stages of development of children and use this effectively to support them in their learning.
- The environment provides children with a good range of learning experiences and activities. Children show high levels of independence and confidently access the resources they need for their play. As newly introduced planning processes develop, it will be important to consider strategies to ensure prior learning is consistently built upon and all children make the best possible progress.
- Practitioners' strong relationships with children and careful observation of their play means that their needs are identified early. Implicit understanding of the wellbeing indicators allows practitioners to provide holistic assessment of children's strengths and support needs. We have asked practitioners to continue to develop their use of the wellbeing indicators in their work with children. This will support children to develop the language to express their feelings.
- Links with external agencies and other professionals are used effectively to support children who face barriers to their learning. Personalised support is leading to positive outcomes for children and practitioners are responsive to individual circumstances. It would now be beneficial for practitioners to develop the way in which they plan for and record this support so that the impact can be more reliably assessed over time.

## Explanation of terms of quantity

The following standard Education Scotland terms of quantity are used in this report:

All	100%
Almost all	91% – 99%
Most	75% – 90%
Majority	50% – 74%
Minority/Less than half	15 – 49%
A few	less than 15%

Other quantitative terms used in this report are to be understood as in common English usage.

## **Education Scotland**

Denholm House  
Almondvale Business Park  
Almondvale Way  
Livingston EH54 6GA

**T** +44 (0)131 244 4330  
**E** enquiries@educationscotland.gsi.gov.uk

[www.education.gov.scot](http://www.education.gov.scot)

© Crown Copyright, 2017

You may re-use this information (excluding images and logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence providing that it is reproduced accurately and not in a misleading context. The material must be acknowledged as Education Scotland copyright and the document title specified.

To view this licence, visit <http://nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence> or e-mail: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk)

Where we have identified any third party copyright information you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.