

Summarised inspection findings

Elphinstone Primary School

East Lothian Council

06 November 2018

Key contextual information

Elphinstone Primary School, near Tranent, serves the village of Elphinstone and the surrounding rural area. At the time of the inspection there were 55 children at the primary stages. Around 40% of children attend the school as a result of placing requests. There were 11 children in the nursery class, which operates on a mornings only basis. The headteacher had taken up post in August 2018, a few weeks prior to the inspection.

1.3 Leadership of change

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

- Elphinstone Primary School, known locally as ‘the wee school on the hill’, is a nurturing school with a warm, family feel. At the time of the inspection, staff were reviewing the vision, values and aims in collaboration with parents and children. The values of ‘co-operation, happiness, respect, honesty, determination and kindness’ are explored and reinforced by staff and children in classes and at assemblies. As a result, these values are very well understood by children. They demonstrate the values through their interactions with each other in daily school life, and in their positive attitudes to learning. The school plays a central role in local community. All staff work together very closely as a team for the benefit of all children and families. They are very knowledgeable about the rural context of the area that the school serves and the opportunities and challenges that this can bring for families. The very positive and caring approach taken by all staff ensures an inclusive ethos where parents are welcomed and children are cherished and feel safe.
- Although having taken up post just prior to the inspection, the headteacher is already very highly regarded by the whole school community. Her interpersonal skills are exceptional. Through her astute, dynamic and practical approach, she has made a positive impact on the life of the school in a very short space of time. She has begun to evaluate accurately the many existing strengths of the school, and identify areas for further improvement. The headteacher is very well supported by the principal teacher, who assists in managing the day-to-day life of the school in a calm and purposeful way. The principal teacher has a significant class-teaching commitment, and her teaching is a model of good practice.
- All staff contribute willingly to school life. Teachers each have responsibility for leading aspects of curriculum development. Support, clerical and janitorial staff also play an important role in ensuring children’s time in school is positive and motivating. They take on responsibilities, such as leading clubs and playground activities, from which children clearly benefit. Staff appreciate opportunities to collaborate and share practice with each other. To build on this, the headteacher has appropriate plans to extend the opportunities for staff to share practice with and visit other schools. She has identified that this will help to highlight further improvements, whilst providing valuable opportunities to explore best practice in similar school settings.

- The headteacher and staff use their collective knowledge of children and families, alongside the range of available data they have, to help pinpoint priorities for future improvement. Teachers make good use of *How Good is Our School?* (4th edition) to reflect on their work. Collectively, they identify what is working well and areas for development. In recent years, staff have focused on improving children's skills in listening and talking. There is clear evidence of the impact of their work in this area, which is demonstrated in children's good progress in listening and talking. The priorities within the current improvement plan focus clearly on continuing to raise attainment in literacy and numeracy. Staff have also identified the need to focus on developing children's social and emotional wellbeing, particularly their confidence, resilience and ambition. Since taking up post, the headteacher has correctly identified that a more systematic and joined-up approach to using self-evaluation is a next step. This will help staff to make more precise judgements about the standards of learning and teaching, and to evaluate the impact and value of the many initiatives and interventions that they work hard to deliver.
- The headteacher has carried out a range of activities, including observations of classroom practice and sampling children's work, to assess the quality of children's experiences. She should continue with her plans to develop a more strategic system for monitoring and tracking the attainment of children. At present, each teacher keeps a record of how all children in their class are progressing in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. Going forward, a more joined-up, whole school approach will provide the headteacher and staff with an overview of how well children are progressing as they move through the school. This should allow teachers to pinpoint more accurately where children require additional support, or challenge, in order for all children to make the best possible progress in all areas of their learning.
- Children have many opportunities to make decisions about, and influence aspects of their school experience. For example children in the pupil council, eco committee and 'Tutti Fruitti' group spoke to inspectors with pride about their role in school improvement. Commendably, the school was an early adopter of the national resource, 'How good is OUR school?' and children across all classes have worked together to evaluate their school experiences. They have identified their desire to have more say in their day-to-day learning, and to explore in more detail the wellbeing indicators. These areas feature in the school improvement plan for this session.
- In 2017/18, the school used the majority of their Pupil Equity Fund allocation to employ additional staff to run Forest Schools sessions for children, and to provide targeted, one-to-one support for a few identified children. In addition, funding was used to buy resources for literacy and numeracy. Staff have identified that children enjoyed their experiences outdoors in the Forest Schools activities, but as yet, have not evaluated the impact of this initiative on children's learning or attainment. We have asked the school to explore creative ways to ensure all staff, parents and partners can contribute to the agenda for change and future allocations of financial resources.

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

good

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

- Children enjoy coming to school and are willing participants in their learning. They are often motivated by the tasks and activities on offer to them, and this is demonstrated in their positive attitudes to learning. At all stages of the school, children demonstrate independence and responsibility, as they organise their own resources for completing tasks and activities. They work well together in co-operative teams. Children appreciate the opportunities they have to make choices in their learning.
- The importance of play as core part of learning, for children of all ages, is fully recognised by the staff team. The development of 'loose parts play' has been led very successfully by a member of the support staff team. As a result, staff report that children are more active and positively engaged in the playground, leading to more creative and productive playtime experiences and fewer disagreements. This work has been rightly recognised within East Lothian Council as good practice.
- Children have regular opportunities to use digital technology. Interactive whiteboards are used as a teaching tool to enhance learning and teaching. Laptops are used well by children for varied learning activities. For example, in accessing a wide range of software; preparing presentations; and writing stories. A new format for on-line 'learning journals' has very recently been introduced. Children enjoy taking responsibility for organising and sharing aspects of their classwork on this digital platform. There are plans in place to ensure that these on-line journals now develop to capture children's successes, targets and next steps in learning across the curriculum. Parents we spoke to during the inspection were very positive about this development, and felt that the new on-line format was accessible and helped them to gain a better insight into their children's learning.
- The quality of teaching observed across the school during the inspection was good overall, with some very good examples. All teachers share the purpose of lessons well, and overall, children are clear about how they can achieve success. Across the school, children can describe the tasks they are engaged in, and increasingly, the skills they are developing. Where teaching practice is most effective, learning tasks across the curriculum are very carefully differentiated within the multi-stage composite classes to ensure all children are challenged and supported in their learning. Staff should continue to share best practice in learning and teaching. This will help to ensure that they are clear about which overarching skills they want children to practice and master as they move through the school.
- Teachers and support staff make effective use of questioning to encourage children to think and to explain their learning. Staff have worked together over time to develop shared and agreed expectations for aspects of learning and teaching, for example for the use of formative assessment and lesson structure. This is helping to ensure that all children can experience

activities that are varied and provide, overall, appropriate levels of support and challenge. It also ensures that all children are involved in evaluating and assessing their own work, as well as the work of their peers.

- In all classes, teachers provide verbal and written feedback to children on their learning. Where written feedback is most effective, it focuses on the strengths of children's learning and what they need to do next to improve. Overall, most children are able to talk well about their own learning. Children themselves, through a process of self-evaluation, have identified that they would like to have more direct influence on their own learning. They will benefit from continued opportunities to engage in conversations about their learning, as individuals and in groups, and to gain confidence in this within new and unfamiliar contexts.
- It is established practice within the school for all teachers to discuss the progress of children, individually with the headteacher, on a termly basis. The headteacher has identified the need to now establish an agreed, whole-school overview of assessment, monitoring and tracking, that takes a more strategic approach to scrutinising children's progress. This will help the staff team to gain more confidence in interpreting and responding to the assessment information available to them, in order that each child can make the best possible progress as they move through the school.
- In recent years, staff have developed their approaches to assessment to align with Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) standards and expectations. They are developing confidence in scrutinising and analysing assessment and attainment information. Teachers are positive about their engagement to date with national benchmarks for literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. Teachers have enthusiastically adopted new guidance from East Lothian Council, to help them to plan and assess children's learning across the curriculum. They should continue with their plans to deepen their understanding of benchmarks for all curricular areas, alongside guidance from East Lothian Council. The headteacher has identified that this will better support teachers in planning for progression in learning, and in making more robust assessments of children's progress and achievement of a CfE level across all curricular areas. In recent years, teachers have met regularly with colleagues in local schools to moderate standards, for example, in listening and talking, writing and numeracy, and they report that they find this very helpful. We have asked the headteacher to continue with plans to extend such moderation approaches, to include sharing with colleagues in other schools what works well in planned learning and teaching.

2.2 Curriculum: Learning pathways

- Staff, working with a group of children, have started to develop a curriculum rationale that reflects the local context and the aspirations they have for all learners. There is scope to consult with all children and their families to ensure that the curriculum rationale accurately reflects the context of the school, and the aspirations of the whole school and local community.
- Staff have begun to use the East Lothian Council progression pathways to plan for all curriculum areas. These pathways have been introduced recently to support teachers in planning for progression in learning across the school. Staff have correctly identified that they need to work collaboratively to agree consistent approaches to the use of these pathways. This should help the staff team to secure continuity and cohesion in children's learning across all stages in the school.
- The headteacher and staff have identified the need to continue to develop the curriculum, in line with national guidance and the school's curriculum rationale. As part of this development, the school should create its own, unique curriculum framework that includes planning for digital learning and interdisciplinary learning. There is also scope to more fully involve the school's wide range of enthusiastic and committed partners to help plan and refresh the curriculum.
- The school has made very good progress in supporting children to understand what is meant by, and to develop, skills for learning, life and work. In previous years, children hosted their own 'world of work' conference, which involved partners from Ross High School, Queen Margaret University and the University of Edinburgh. As a result of this event, children decided to set up their own clubs in order to teach each other new skills and to share interests. Now, as part of their weekly timetable, children across the school benefit from participating in these weekly 'skills club' activities. Commendably, these activities are learner led, with a focus on developing the skills that have been identified in the 'Elphinstone Skills Framework'. Children at P6 and P7 thrive in the opportunities to lead these groups.

2.7 Partnerships: Impact on learners – parental engagement

- The school is held in high esteem by parents and community partners. Parents and partners who met with inspectors reported that they feel welcomed in the school and that all staff are very approachable. Children and parents really appreciated the personalised postcards that had been sent to them by the newly appointed headteacher.
- There are positive, respectful relationships between staff and parents. Through inspection activities, all stakeholders commented on the inclusive, caring ethos of the school. There are regular opportunities for informal communication between staff and parents. The school uses a range of digital technology, including social media, to share information and successes with parents. Staff have rightly identified that it would be helpful to work with parents and partners to review the use of digital technology as a way of enhancing collaborative learning partnerships.
- The school has made a good start to working collaboratively with parents to map out plans for extending parental engagement. To date, parents have been encouraged to work with the school on specific projects and initiatives. The school has correctly identified that it now needs to work with parents to plan for partnerships that increase parental engagement in their child's learning.
- The Parent Council is very supportive of the work of the school. Moving forwards, they have plans to work with the headteacher to widen the scope of their work. This should include representation of the range of parents and carers in the school.

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

- Elphinstone Primary is a school where children and adults alike feel valued and part of a community. There is an inclusive and nurturing ethos, built on a culture where high quality relationships support shared, high expectations. Staff have a good understanding of their role in supporting children to achieve success in a range of settings across the day. Children feel confident that adults, across the school, and relevant partners, will provide them with encouragement and opportunities which offer experiences and develop relevant skills. The positive relationships and mutual respect demonstrated by all, creates a supportive environment in which children feel secure and very well cared for. All children who completed the pre-inspection questionnaire agreed that they felt safe; that they were treated fairly and with respect; and were taught how to be healthy.
- The wellbeing of all children is central to the life of the school. The caring and welcoming environment created by all staff helps to ensure that children enjoy learning and socialising together within a warm, family atmosphere. This supportive culture is helping children to gain confidence and resilience. They treat each other with respect and tolerance and celebrate each other's successes and achievements.
- Across the school, children can talk knowledgeably about the school values and why these are relevant. Importantly, children of all ages demonstrate these values in their day-to-day interactions with staff and with each other. A next step is to now develop this successful approach further, by aligning the values more explicitly to the national wellbeing indicators. This will provide children, staff and parents with a common language to discuss and express their views on health and wellbeing more generally. The school has accurately identified that involving children in setting personal health and wellbeing targets is a next step. Building on this, the school should continue to develop parents' understanding of wellbeing and the role of the wider school community in supporting this.
- Children's learning in PE, physical activity and food and health is developing well. They have a good understanding of the importance of regular physical exercise and eating well. They can describe why we should eat more of some foods and less of others. They demonstrated an understanding of basic food hygiene principles when working with the local social enterprise company, 'Roots and Fruits'. Children at all stages enjoy taking part in the 'Daily Mile'. Families are encouraged to join in this activity, and staff keep the format under review to offer variety and challenge for all. Children are involved in roles which have responsibilities to support and promote specific aspects of wellbeing. For example, the well-established Tutti Frutti and eco groups are encouraging children to think about their choice of snack and how their actions can impact on others in taking responsibility for reducing litter in the playground.

- The school engages well with a range of partners who are working well together to support and promote aspects of wellbeing for children and their families. The school and their partners take account of the unique setting of the school and focus on finding solutions to ensure children can participate fully in all that is on offer. Partners support the school's arrangements for children at points of transition very well. As a result, transition arrangements are very well embedded and effective. Tailored and enhanced approaches ensure that all children who require some additional help feel very well supported in making a smooth start in the nursery, making the transition to P1, and for older children, moving on to secondary school.
- The school successfully delivers on the aspects of health and wellbeing that are the responsibility of all. Children's learning in health and wellbeing is carefully planned to ensure progression in learning as they move through the school; and to ensure coverage of all of the relevant experiences and outcomes, whether these are delivered in classes, in the community, or through the wider life of the school.
- The headteacher is aware of her roles and responsibilities related to statutory duties. The school has appropriate procedures in place to identify the additional support and intervention that individual children require. Highly skilled support assistants add value to children's experiences. For example, they provide targeted support for groups of children in order to reinforce aspects of learning in literacy and numeracy. They also provide high quality one-to-one support for some children, in order to assist them to access the curriculum in an inclusive and meaningful way. The school works very well with a wide range of partners to ensure that the needs of children and families are met. Children who require a Child's Plan have one in place. These plans are appropriate, and reviewed regularly with parents and partners. Teachers monitor children's attendance and punctuality regularly and are proactive in dealing with and monitoring any issues that may arise. The main duties under The Schools (Health Promotion and Nutrition) (Scotland) Act 2007 are being met. The information provided in relation to the nutritional analysis of planned school lunch menus needs further work to ensure full compliance with the relevant regulations.
- All children are included, engaged and involved in the life of the school. Through well-planned approaches to learning for sustainability, staff successfully widen children's awareness and understanding of diversity and equality in the wider world in a relevant way. By P7, children can talk about 'global goals' in an informed way, linked to topical national and international news stories.
- Staff have a good understanding of the range of needs of individual children and families. Inspectors were able to endorse the headteacher's plans to develop a more strategic approach to gathering and using a wider range of data to support children's wellbeing. This includes using data and information in a focused way to identify and address any barriers to opportunities that may exist for families. In addition, a next step is to use such data to focus on different groups of learners, for example in relation to evaluating the progress of children with additional support needs, higher-achieving children and children who may be disadvantaged by poverty.

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

Attainment in literacy and numeracy

- Across the school, most children are achieving appropriate levels of attainment in literacy and English. The majority of children are achieving appropriate levels of attainment in numeracy and mathematics.
- The Curriculum for Excellence levels at June 2018, provided by the school during the inspection, show that most children by the end of P1 have achieved early level in listening and talking, reading and writing. The majority of children by the end of P1 have achieved early level in numeracy. By the end of P4, most children have achieved appropriate levels of attainment in listening and talking, reading and numeracy. The majority of children by the end of P4 have achieved appropriate levels of attainment in writing. By the end of P7, the majority of children achieved expected levels of attainment in listening and talking, reading, writing and numeracy. Within the analysis of this data, it must be recognised that all children who have identified barriers to their learning are making good progress towards their individual learning targets.

Attainment in literacy and English

- Attainment in literacy and English is good overall. According to the school's own data, most children are making good progress in listening and talking, reading and writing.
- From a range of inspection evidence, including class observations, looking at children's work and working with sample groups of children, inspectors found that most children achieve appropriate Curriculum for Excellence levels. Staff use national benchmarks, together with data from a range of standardised and diagnostic assessments, to inform their professional judgement of achievement of a level.

Listening and talking

- Overall, children's attainment in listening and talking is good. Almost all children are successfully developing and applying their skills in listening and talking across all areas of the curriculum. There is a clear focus on listening and talking across the school. The majority of children speak confidently and articulately, and are able to explain reasons for their responses. Almost all children listen well to each other. Children at the early level can ask and answer questions well. They are learning to take turns and listen respectfully when others are talking. At first level, children can share their views and listen critically to the views of others. They are able to respond to texts and present well thought out reasons for their responses. At second level, children can discuss the features of a wide range of texts and explain their reasons for choosing preferred types of texts. They can share their feelings, as well as listen and respond appropriately to the views of others.

Reading

- The majority of children are making good progress in their reading. Children are encouraged to read for pleasure across the school. There is a wide range of engaging books of all levels within the school library and classroom areas. Children readily choose to read voluntarily, both to enhance their learning and as an activity of choice. Children at all levels talk willingly about their favourite authors and can justify their choices. At the early level, almost all children are developing their knowledge of sounds, letters and patterns. The majority of children are beginning to use this knowledge to read new words. They can read simple texts aloud and are beginning to develop their reading voice. At the first level, the majority of children read fluently and decode unfamiliar words. Almost all can share their thoughts about the text they have read and are able to reflect on their response to the author's style. Children at second level read aloud fluently, demonstrating understanding and critical awareness of what the author has achieved. They can make comment on the main features of the book they are reading and respond thoughtfully to higher order questions. As planned, the school should continue to review the range of resources for reading to ensure an appropriately brisk pace and maintain a high level of interest and motivation.

Writing

- Attainment in writing is good, overall. At early level, most children achieve expected levels of attainment. The majority do so at first and at second levels. The headteacher has correctly identified that the data staff have gathered to assess children's writing should be analysed further, to inform improved approaches to teaching writing across the school. During inspection activities, many learners at first and second levels had low levels of interest and engagement in writing processes. The school should strive to provide all learners with more frequent opportunities to create a wide range of texts. There needs to be a clear focus on providing opportunities for children to develop, apply and celebrate their writing skills in real life and other meaningful contexts.
- At early level, most children are beginning to attempt to write familiar words and the majority are starting to experiment with capital letters and full stops. Children at first level are applying their phonic knowledge when spelling familiar and unfamiliar words. They are using connecting words well to make their sentences longer and more interesting. Children at second level have worked on a limited number of texts at this stage in the session. They are able to talk confidently about texts completed previously, but these were not available for sharing as part of the inspection process.

Attainment in numeracy and mathematics

- Overall, children are making good progress in numeracy and mathematics.
- Children enjoy this aspect of their learning. Staff across the school ensure that children have regular opportunities to apply their skills in numeracy across different aspects of their learning. This includes activities outdoors and in the local community as part of interdisciplinary learning. This is having a positive impact on how children, at all stages, see numeracy as an important skill for life. Children in all classes have access to a range of helpful resources, including learning wall displays, that support their learning in numeracy very well. Across the school, children would benefit from a sharper focus on knowing and applying various strategies and skills to solve problems.

Number

- Across the school, almost all children are developing their skills well in number. At the early level, almost all children can sequence numbers to 10, including confident use of the terms 'before, after, more and less'. A few are making strong progress and have a secure grasp of

number bonds to 20 and beyond, and demonstrate ably the skills of doubling and halving. Most children at first level are confident in rounding numbers to the nearest 10 and 100. Most can add, subtract, multiply and divide with accuracy. They can use their knowledge of fractions and decimals well to solve word problems. Within second level, most children confidently work on partitioning of numbers to three decimal places, and solve problems involving four-digit calculations. Almost all children are developing their skills well in mental agility. They enjoy their 'rainbow maths' activities, which provides an element of competition, personalisation and choice.

Time

- Almost all children know dates, days and the months of the year in sequence. At early level, almost all children can tell 'o'clock' times. They use this knowledge to construct 'waiting lists' in their pretend hospital. At first level, almost all children know there are 60 seconds in a minute, and 60 seconds in an hour. Within second level, children investigate and apply their knowledge about time well in context, through constructing a timeline of the main events in WW2. To extend their knowledge, they visited the village cemetery to research members of the Elphinstone community who died during the war years.

Measure

- Overall, almost all children making good progress in measure. At early level, almost all children can use mathematical language, such as tallest, smallest, shortest and longest, with confidence. Within first level, most children can use standard (centimetres) and non-standard units of measurement confidently. Within second level, most children can estimate distance and length with some accuracy, using centimetres, metres and kilometres appropriately.

Attainment over time

- The current attainment data available, on a class-by-class basis, indicates that attainment in literacy and English and numeracy and mathematics is improving over time. Analysis of this data suggests that, overall, the school is making good progress in closing the gap in attainment between different socio-economic groups. Staff in the school appreciate that small numbers of pupils in individual year groups may make it difficult to continuously evidence improvements over time. The school should explore further their approaches to showing evidence of improvement. Staff recognise the need to strengthen their approaches to tracking and measuring the effectiveness of interventions to ensure best possible progress for children.
- Teachers are becoming more confident in using standardised assessment information, together with the national benchmarks, to make professional judgments about children's progress. They have engaged recently in moderation activities with staff from other schools, with a focus on listening and talking. Staff recognise that they now need to revise approaches to using the moderation across the school, including extending moderation activities to other areas of the curriculum.

Overall quality of learners' achievement

- Children at Elphinstone Primary School are confident, exercise responsibility and contribute very effectively to the life of their school. They are developing important skills as learners and are able to work both independently and co-operatively. Through their leadership of skills clubs, children in the upper stages have opportunities to organise and lead learning. This is impacting positively on their confidence and independence. All children are members of a skills club, contributing to the plans for their group. This raises the profile of the skills agenda across the school. Almost all children can readily make the connections between the skills they are developing in school and the world of work. Children talk confidently about why skills are

important now and for job opportunities in the future. The school should consider how it could extend the ways in which children can apply the skills they are developing through these clubs.

- Children identify with the school values and can talk confidently about how these relate to the roles which they have in committee groups. Through membership of committee groups, children are learning how to ensure that the school's values are real and meaningful in decision making in the school.
- Staff support children to understand why getting involved in a wide range of activities is an important part of their education and prepares them for careers and life beyond school. The school is at the early stage of recording children's personal achievements. A next step is develop this further, perhaps as part of digital 'learning journals', as these progress.

Equity for all learners

- Staff are very committed to promoting equity for all learners. Staff know their children and their families well. Relationships across the school are very positive and children talk confidently about what inclusion means for them in their school. Daily news programmes are used to stimulate discussions about fairness and equity. As a result of this, children can confidently make connections between recent events in the news and the fair and equitable decisions which they make in their own lives.
- The school has identified the ways in which it can use Pupil Equity Fund to address barriers to learning, which arise as a result of economic or social disadvantage. Children's views are used to make adjustments to the Forest Schools activities programme. Staff have correctly recognised the need to develop methodical ways of to evaluate the impact of such interventions.

Choice of QI: 2.5 Family Learning

- Engaging families in learning
- Early intervention and prevention
- Quality of family learning programmes

- The quality of relationships between parents and staff is a strength of the nursery and school. The headteacher and staff are fully committed to engaging families in learning and in providing support to families. They have a sound knowledge of the local context in which children live and possible challenges and barriers they may encounter. Universal support is offered to all families, through ongoing communication with staff; through the open-door policy; the welcoming, non-judgemental ethos; and through social media. Parents are invited to attend regular, whole-school learning events that celebrate children's learning and the culture of the local community. Almost all parents, across the primary school and nursery class who responded to the Education Scotland questionnaire, stated that the school gives advice on how to support their child's learning at home.
- In the nursery class, practitioners have been successful in building positive and trusting relationships with families. A range of home-link learning resources are utilised across the year, including take-home story sacks and games. Parents are invited to stay and play sessions and for coffee mornings. As parents themselves have identified through the nursery's own questionnaire, there is scope to further involve parents and carers in the learning within the nursery class. This will support the development of a shared understanding of early learning pedagogy.
- Staff have carried out a thorough audit of the range of ways that they encourage parents to participate in the life of the nursery and school, and increasingly, as partners in their children's learning. This audit includes the range of universal support for all, and more targeted interventions to support families. The headteacher has identified the need to take a more pro-active, solution-focused approach to identifying barriers that may exist and by offering the types of targeted support that will best meet the needs of families.
- The development of family learning programmes is at an early stage. As staff have identified, there is considerable scope for families to be more engaged in this area, and to participate in co-designing and delivering high-quality learning programmes. For example, staff could explore ways to ask parents and families what would support them best to help their children in literacy and numeracy. This could enable parents to gain a deeper and more relevant understanding of what is taught at the school and the methodologies deployed. This would support the next step of moving from parental involvement towards family learning, and in fostering even stronger home-school links.
- With the dedication of all staff, and the significant experience of the headteacher in this area, the school is well placed to progress the development of family learning. Staff should continue with plans to develop a shared understanding, rationale, vision and aims for family learning at Elphinstone Primary School and nursery class. This should be developed with parents and partners, to determine what families would find useful and to ensure successful implementation.

Explanation of terms of quality

The following standard Education Scotland terms of quality 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.