

28 November 2023

Dear Parent/Carer

In September 2023, a team of inspectors from Education Scotland and the Care Inspectorate visited Heathryburn Primary School and Nursery Class. During our visit, we talked to parents/carers and children and worked closely with the headteacher and staff.

The inspection team found the following strengths in the school's work.

- The headteacher's leadership of the primary school is providing much needed stability and direction following recent periods of significant challenge. She has supported children and staff well during the recovery period following the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Staff's commitment to fostering positive, nurturing relationships with children. Children are respectful, welcoming and proud of their school. They demonstrate the values of the school very well in their interactions with others.
- Senior leaders monitoring and tracking approaches record accurately children's progress and levels of attainment. This approach is helping staff to predict how well children will achieve in their learning.

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

- Staff need to improve the quality and consistency of learning and teaching across the school and nursery. This will support children's improved progress and attainment in literacy and numeracy.
- The headteacher, senior leaders, and staff should improve the quality of play-based learning across the early level. This will support children to experience learning that promotes creativity, curiosity and investigate play.
- The headteacher needs to make significant improvement to the leadership of change in the nursery. Senior leaders and staff, supported by the local authority, should work together to develop approaches to evaluating, monitoring and tracking the work of the nursery and improve children's progress in learning.
- Senior leaders and practitioners should improve the planning of the nursery curriculum to ensure children receive a broad range of learning experiences appropriate to their needs. Practitioners should plan learning taking account of children who require additional support, as well those who require increasing challenge.

We gathered evidence to enable us to evaluate the school's work using four quality indicators from [How good is our school? \(4th edition\)](#) and [How good is our early learning and childcare?](#) Quality indicators help schools, local authorities and inspectors to judge what is working well and what needs to be improved. Following the inspection of each school, the Scottish Government gathers details of our evaluations to keep track of how well Scottish schools are doing.

Here are Education Scotland's evaluations for Heathryburn Primary School and Nursery Class.

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

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

We gathered evidence to enable us to evaluate the early learning and childcare setting using the quality indicators from [A quality framework for daycare of children, childminding and school-aged childcare](#). The framework supports settings, providers and inspectors to assess what is working well and what needs to be improved. Following the inspection of each setting, the Scottish Government gathers details of our evaluations to keep track of how well early learning and childcare settings are doing. The Care Inspectorate evaluations are also used by local authorities when considering how settings are meeting the national standard for funded early learning and childcare.

The Care Inspectorate's evaluations for the early learning and childcare setting are:

Detailed evaluations	Evaluation
Key question 1: How good is our care, play and learning?	
1.1 Nurturing care and support	weak
1.3 Play and learning	weak
Key question 2: How good is our setting?	
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	adequate
Key question 3: How good is our leadership?	
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	weak
Key question 4: How good is our staff team?	
4.3 Staff deployment	weak

During the previous Care Inspectorate inspection, the setting had no requirements and five areas for improvement. From these, no areas for improvement were met. Outstanding issues relating to these areas for improvement are carried forward in this inspection. As a result of this inspection, two areas for improvement are no longer in place and have been incorporated into two new requirements under key question 1: 'How good is our care play and learning.' Three areas for improvement have been reworded and carried forward and two new areas of improvement have been added.

Requirements made by the Care Inspectorate for the early learning and childcare setting.

1. By 13 October 2023, the provider must make the proper provision for the health and wellbeing of children. To do this they must, at a minimum:
 - a) Ensure children's personal plans contain relevant information and plans to support individual children.
 - b) Ensure information gathered is used effectively by staff to support the health and wellbeing of children.
 - c) Ensure all staff caring for children are consistently acting on agreed strategies to meet the health and wellbeing needs of children.

This is to comply with Regulation 4 (1) (a) (Welfare of users) of The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (SSI 2011/210).

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'My personal plan (sometime referred to as a care plan) is right for me because it sets out how my needs will be met, as well as my wished and choices' (HSCS 1.15).

2. By 24 November 2023, the provider must support children to reach their full potential through quality play and learning experiences. To do this they must at a minimum:
 - a) Ensure play experiences develop children's skills in language, literacy and numeracy.
 - b) Ensure children's play experiences are relevant, personalised and sufficiently challenging for their stage of development.
 - c) Ensure quality observations and skilled interactions support children to reach their full potential.

This is to comply with Regulation 4 (1) (a) (Welfare of users) of The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (SSI 2011/210).

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'I am supported to achieve my potential in education and employment if that is right for me' (HSCS 1.27).

Areas for improvement made by Care Inspectorate for the early learning and childcare setting.

1. To support children's health and wellbeing the manager and staff should ensure that all children experience everyday mealtimes that are relaxed, create meaningful and positive experiences and meet their individual needs.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'My care and support meets my needs and is right for me' (HSCS 1.19).

2. The provider, leadership and staff team should ensure the safe administration of medication. To do this the service should at a minimum:
 - Ensure that a clear policy is in place that covers all areas of practice as per guidance.
 - Ensure staff are knowledgeable in how to follow the policy in place.
 - Ensure that robust quality assurance of medication information and permissions is in place and meets the needs of children.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'my personal plan (sometimes referred to as a care plan) is right for me because it sets out how my needs will be met, as well as my wishes and choices' (HSCS 1.15); and 'I experienced high quality care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance on best practice' (HSCS 4.11).

3. The provider, leadership and staff team should ensure children are cared for in an environment that is welcoming, homely and reflects their interests. This should include but not limited to:
 - The environment and furnishings are well presented throughout.
 - Play spaces offer a range of resources and materials to effectively challenge and stimulate children and reflect their current interests and curiosities, both indoors and outdoors.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'I experience an environment that is well looked after with clean, tidy and well maintained furnishings and equipment' (HSCS 5.24); and 'I can direct my own play and activities in the way that I choose, and freely access a wide range of experiences and resources suitable for my age and stage, which stimulate my natural curiosity, learning and creativity' (HSCS 2.27).

4. The provider, leadership and staff team should ensure that quality assurance along with regular self-evaluation leads to high quality, sustained improvements to children's experiences. This should include but not be limited to:
 - Improving staff's knowledge and understanding of the document 'A quality framework for daycare of children and childminding and school aged children' and use this as part of their self-evaluation work.
 - Ensuring staff, children and families are meaningfully involved in evaluation and improvement of the service.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'I can be meaningfully involved in how the organisation that supports and cares for me work and develop' (HSCS 4.6); and 'I am supported to give regular feedback on how I experience my care and support and the organisation uses learning from this to improve' (HSCS 4.8).

5. To ensure quality care for children the provider, leadership and staff team should ensure staff are consistently deployed in a way that meets children's needs. This should include but not limited to:
- All staff should ensure effective supervision and quality engagement with children.
 - Lead staff should provide effective mentorship and guidance.
 - All staff should work together to make progress.
 - Staff deployment practice ensures a good mix of experience and those with, knowledge of children are present when supervising groups.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states that: 'I have confidence in people because they are trained competent and skilled are able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes' (HSCS 3.14).

A more detailed document called Summarised Inspection Findings (SIF) will be available on the Education Scotland website at: [Details | Find an inspection report | Find an inspection report | Inspection and Review | Education Scotland](#).

What happens next?

As a result of our inspection findings we think that the early learning and childcare setting needs additional support and more time to make necessary improvements. We will liaise with Aberdeen City Council regarding the school's capacity to improve. We will return to carry out a further inspection of the setting within 6 months of the publication of this letter. We will discuss with Aberdeen City Council the details of this inspection. When we return to inspect the setting we will write to you as parents/carers informing you of the progress made.

As a result of the Care Inspectorates findings and evaluations, further scrutiny intervention will be considered to support improvements in the early learning and childcare setting.

Graham Parry
HM Inspector

Nicola Creighton
Care Inspector