

REPORT TO: Education Committee

MEETING DATE: 18 June 2014

BY: Depute Chief Executive (Resources and People Services)

SUBJECT: Inspection of Musselburgh Burgh Primary School and Nursery Class by Education Scotland

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To report to Committee on the report by Education Scotland on the inspection of Musselburgh Burgh Primary School and Nursery Class.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to: -
- (i) Note the content of the Education Scotland report (Appendix 1).
 - (ii) Note that as a result of the very good quality of education provided by the school, Education Scotland will make no further visits to the school in connection with the recommendations of the report.
 - (iii) Congratulate the Head Teacher and staff on the contents of the report.

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Musselburgh Burgh Primary School and Nursery Class was inspected in January 2014 by Education Scotland and a report was published in March 2014.
- 3.2 The report noted that the particular strengths of the school were:
- The commitment of senior managers and all staff to securing improvements for children.
 - Articulate and confident children who achieve particularly well in the expressive arts.
 - Strong partnerships with parents and the local community which enhance children's experiences.
 - The development of the school and nursery grounds as a focus for play and learning.

3.3 Education Scotland agreed the following areas for further improvement with the school and education authority:

- Continue to raise attainment in English language and mathematics.
- Further develop approaches to planning and assessing children's learning using Curriculum for Excellence.

4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 None

5 EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT

5.1 This report is not applicable to the well being of equalities groups and an Equalities Impact Assessment is not required.

6 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Financial - None

6.2 Personnel - None

6.3 Other - None

7 BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 The inspection of Musselburgh Burgh Primary School and Nursery Class.

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DATE	23 May 2014

11 March 2014

Dear Parent/Carer

**Musselburgh Burgh Primary School and Nursery Class
East Lothian Council**

Recently, as you may know, my colleagues and I inspected your child's school. During our visit, we talked to parents and children and worked closely with the headteacher and staff. We wanted to find out how well children are learning and achieving and how well the school supports children to do their best. The headteacher shared with us the school's successes and priorities for improvement. We looked at some particular aspects of the school's recent work, including partnerships with parents and the local community, the role of children in decision-making and opportunities for them to achieve across the life of the school. As a result, we were able to find out how good the school is at improving children's education.

How well do children learn and achieve?

Across the school, children are articulate, motivated and confident learners. From nursery to P7, children in all classes, including learners in the communication provision class, benefit from taking part in a wide range of interesting and worthwhile learning experiences. In the nursery, children can choose to play in different areas of their playrooms. They work very well together, along with staff and parents, to develop their attractive outdoor play area. They are particularly enthusiastic about digging in their garden to look for worms. At the primary stages, children rightly feel that they are listened to and that staff take account of their views in planning learning and in improving aspects of school life. Children are very proud of their direct involvement in improving the playground, the pupil toilets and parking arrangements outside the school. They are motivated to take the lead in organising community and school events. For example, during 'Scotland Month', children in P4 organised a successful Scottish community coffee morning for parents, families and the local community. Children in P6 hosted an entertaining Burns Supper. These events helped to develop children's skills in music, dance and reciting Scots poetry, whilst also developing their enterprise skills. Children are very knowledgeable about the importance of keeping healthy and are becoming increasingly aware about global issues. Through their work in becoming a UNICEF Rights Respecting School, older children have explored and can make sense of complex issues such as poverty and equality.

Most children in the nursery are making good progress in early literacy and numeracy. Most can recognise some letters and are making good attempts at writing their name. They listen well in group activities and to stories. Children are applying their early mathematical skills and language appropriately in play situations and real-life contexts,

such as taking orders and counting money to buy food in their 'Tartan Café'. Overall, across the primary and communication provision classes, most children are making good progress in English language and mathematics. At all stages, a few children are making very good progress in their learning. Recently, the school has taken action to improve standards in mathematics and there are signs that this work is having a positive effect. As a result, most children now have a good understanding about different strategies that they can use to solve mathematical problems. For example, at the middle stages, most children work well together in small groups to estimate and measure aspects of their classroom and playground. Younger children use number lines independently to check their work. The school is also working hard to improve attainment in English language. Children make good use of the improved lending library and are encouraged to read for pleasure and appreciate books. They write for a range of interesting purposes, often linked to their topic work. At the upper stages, children demonstrate their creativity and knowledge about Scots language very well to write their own entertaining poems entitled 'Tae a Tunnock's Teacake'. Across the school, children are making very good progress in developing their skills in the expressive arts. They sing and perform very well at concerts, assemblies, drama productions and other events. The standard of children's work in art is high.

How well does the school support children to develop and learn?

Across the school, there are very effective procedures in place to identify and address any barriers to children's learning. In the nursery, staff provide a good range of activities and resources to meet children's needs. At the primary stages, most teachers plan tasks and activities at the right level of difficulty to meet the differing learning needs of children in their class. Staff should continue to work together to ensure that this good practice is more consistent across the school. Homework is regular, varied and helps children reinforce their learning in a motivating and challenging way. Children with additional support needs, including children with Autism Spectrum Disorders in the communication provision class, are supported effectively. All children requiring additional support have appropriate plans in place. Staff should now ensure that learning targets within individual support plans are clear and that children are involved more fully in setting and reviewing their own targets to ensure they achieve as highly as possible.

Children play a key role in planning their own learning. They choose topics that motivate them and decide what they would like to find out and the best way to go about it. Teachers are improving the way they use Curriculum for Excellence guidance to plan and assess children's learning. They should continue with their plans to develop further a focused approach to planning learning, that identifies more clearly the particular skills and knowledge that children are expected to learn. We have asked teachers to share their expertise and knowledge about interdisciplinary learning across the staff team, to ensure that children at all stages are making links successfully across their learning. Over many years, the school has benefited from highly successful partnerships with parents, health and community professionals, education partners and the wider community. For example, parents and partners have helped the school to transform its grounds into a dynamic and exciting place for children to play and learn. Links with Edinburgh University and Loretto School enrich children's experiences in drama, music and in learning languages. A helpful induction

programme enables nursery children to make a smooth start to P1. Appropriate arrangements support children at P7 in moving on successfully to secondary school.

How well does the school improve the quality of its work?

The headteacher has a clear sense of purpose and direction. She provides a high level of care and encouragement to children, parents and staff. Almost all parents are very satisfied with the work of the school. The newly-appointed depute headteacher and the principal teachers carry out their remits very effectively and provide valuable support to the headteacher. Together, they monitor the quality of learning and teaching across the primary stages in a focused way to ensure continuous improvement. They should extend this practice further to include closer monitoring of the work of the communication provision class and the nursery. Across the school, staff work very well individually and together in groups to develop the curriculum. They should continue with their plans to develop their approaches to tracking children's progress across their learning. Together with senior managers, staff have a good understanding of what is working well and what needs to be improved. The school is well placed to improve further.

This inspection found the following key strengths.

- The commitment of senior managers and all staff to securing improvements for children.
- Articulate and confident children who achieve particularly well in the expressive arts.
- Strong partnerships with parents and the local community which enhance children's experiences.
- The development of the school and nursery grounds as a focus for play and learning.

We discussed with staff and East Lothian Council how they might continue to improve the school and nursery class. This is what we agreed with them.

- Continue to raise attainment in English language and mathematics.
- Further develop approaches to planning and assessing children's learning using Curriculum for Excellence.

What happens at the end of the inspection?

We are satisfied with the overall quality of provision. We are confident that the school's self-evaluation processes are leading to improvements. As a result, we will make no further visits in connection with this inspection. As part of its arrangements for reporting to parents on the quality of education, East Lothian Council will inform parents about the school's progress.

Lesley A Johnstone
HM Inspector

Additional inspection evidence, such as details of the quality indicator evaluations, for your school can be found on the Education Scotland website at <http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/inspectionandreview/reports/school/primsec/MuselburghBurghPrimarySchoolEastLothian.asp>

If you would like to receive this letter in a different format, for example, in a translation please contact the administration team on the above telephone number.

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