

21 February 2017

Dear Parent/Carer

In November, a team of inspectors from Education Scotland and the Care Inspectorate visited St Mary's Primary School and Nursery Class. During our visit, we talked to parents/carers and young people and worked closely with the headteacher and staff. We gathered evidence to evaluate the quality of leadership and management, learning provision and young people's successes and achievements.

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

- The experienced headteacher who has gained a high level of respect for the school within its community.
- Children who are confident, enjoy learning and are motivated to do their best.
- All children in the primary stages are involved in committees and have ideas about how to make further improvements to their school. They feel valued and are well cared for by staff. Across the nursery class and primary stages, staff work well with parents and other professional partners to support children.
- Children are making good progress in literacy and in particular are developing effective talking and listening skills.
- The school provides well-targeted support for children who have additional support needs and strives to ensure they make the best progress possible.

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

- Further develop the shared leadership of change across the school and in particular of the nursery class.
- Continue to improve consistency in the quality of learning, teaching and the use of assessment.
- Raise attainment and the level of challenge for all children.

Quality indicators help schools, education authorities and inspectors to judge what is good and what needs to be improved in the work of the school. You can find these quality indicators in the publication *How good is our school? for the primary stages and for the nursery class, How good is our Early Learning and Childcare?*¹. Following the inspection of each school, the Scottish Government gathers evaluations of three important quality indicators to keep track of how well all Scottish schools are doing.

Here are Education Scotland's evaluations for St Mary's Primary School and Nursery Class

Primary stages

Leadership of change	Good
Learning, teaching and assessment	Good
Raising attainment and achievement	Good
Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion	Good

Nursery class

Leadership of change	Satisfactory
Learning, teaching and assessment	Satisfactory
Securing children's progress	Satisfactory
Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion	Satisfactory

¹ *How good is our school? (4th Edition) 2015; How good is our Early Learning and Childcare? 2016* – [How Good Is Our School?](#) [How good is our early learning and childcare?](#)

Here are the Care Inspectorate gradings for the nursery class

Quality of care and support	Good
Quality of environment	Good
Quality of staffing	Good
Quality of management and leadership	Adequate

Requirements/recommendations made by Care Inspectorate for the nursery class:

During the previous Care Inspectorate inspection, the school had no requirements and six recommendations. From these, two recommendations have been met and four recommendations have been partially met. Outstanding issues relating to quality assurance are carried forward in this inspection. As a result of this inspection, there is one requirement and six recommendations.

Requirement:

- The provider must demonstrate that staff understand and know how to implement the child protection policy and procedures in order to keep children safe.
This is in order to comply with Scottish Statutory Instruments 110 (2011) regulation 210, 4(1)(a) welfare of users. A provider must make provision for health, welfare and safety of service users.
National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16:
Standard 3 - Health and wellbeing and Standard 4 - Well-managed service.
Timescale: 3 Months

Recommendations:

- In order for staff to support children with specific medical needs, we recommend that the nursery should include the following to a personal care plan:
 - Details of the child's allergy or medical condition and how information about this should be shared and managed.
 - What measures need to be put in place to prevent an allergic reaction or address a medical need.
 - What action staff should take in the event of a reaction or the child becoming unwell.National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16:
Standard 3 - Health and wellbeing.

- The provider should ensure that personal care plans for children are further developed to ensure that all information relevant to children's wellbeing is recorded. This is especially relevant where children have barriers to their learning or additional support needs. This information should make clear the possible next steps, different opportunities presented or alternative approaches/strategies being used along with regular evaluation of progress made.
National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16:
Standard 3 - Health and wellbeing.
- The provider should improve children's quality of experience outdoors to allow them to engage in a balanced range of activities. This includes a review of current resources and use of space. This would support children to achieve, have fun and exercise choice.
National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16:
Standard 4 – Engaging with children and Standard 5 – Quality of experience.
- The provider should promote with staff, the Scottish Social Services Council pathway resource known as 'steps into leadership'. This would allow staff to develop skills of leadership which would improve their own professional practice and outcomes for children.
National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16:
Standard 12 – Confidence in staff.
- The headteacher should provide clear leadership and direction to ensure staff are fully supported to carry out their roles as practitioners to improve outcomes for children.
National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16:
Standard 11 - Improving the service and Standard 14 – Well-managed service.
- To ensure the service is rigorous in reviewing all areas within the nursery, we recommend formal auditing and monitoring systems should be put in place and all staff are involved to ensure a shared approach. Actions should be recorded and the results should show how this has impacted on the service. This would ensure that any issues are addressed quickly and support continuous improvement.
National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16:
Standard 11 – Improving the service and Standard 14 – Well-managed service.

The letter and more detailed summarised inspection findings will be available on the Education Scotland and Care Inspectorate websites at

<https://www.education.gov.scot/reports/midlothian/5542324> and

<http://www.scswis.com/>

What happens next?

We are confident that the school has the capacity to continue to improve and so Education Scotland will make no more visits in connection with this inspection. Midlothian Council will inform parents/carers about the school's progress as part of its arrangements for reporting on the quality of its schools.

A notification from the Care Inspectorate will be sent to the Provider to complete an action plan to address any requirements and recommendations made as a result of this inspection. The Care Inspectorate will return within twelve months to inspect the progress the nursery has made.

Susan Gow
HM Inspector

Niki Cooney
Care Inspector

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Education Scotland

Denholm House
Almondvale Business Park
Almondvale Way
Livingston EH54 6GA

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

<https://www.education.gov.scot/>

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