

The City of Edinburgh Council
Follow Through Report
Pentland Primary School and ELC
November 2023

Background

Education Scotland undertake an annual sample of inspections across Scotland (approximately 240 per year) covering nursery, primary, special and secondary schools. A letter to parents and carers about each inspection is published approximately three months after the inspection. On the basis of this letter the school, with the support of the authority, amends its improvement plan to take account of any agreed areas for improvement.

Pentland Primary School was inspected in February 2020. In November 2023, a team of Quality Improvement Education Officers from The City of Edinburgh Council, representing the nursery and primary sectors, visited Pentland Primary School and Nursery Class. They visited classes and they worked closely with the Head Teacher, the senior leadership team and wider staff to evidence the progress and improvements which the school had made.

Report

During the inspection visit in 2020, Education Scotland evaluated the school and nursery class (ELC) as follows:

School

Quality Indicator	Evaluation
1.3 Leadership of change	Good
2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment	Good
3.2 Raising attainment and achievement	Very Good
3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion	Very Good

Nursery Class/Early Learning & Childcare (ELC)

Quality Indicator	Evaluation
1.3 Leadership of change	Good
2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment	Good
3.2 Securing children's progress	Good
3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion	Very Good

The three areas for improvement identified during the Education Scotland inspection report, published in July 2020, are as follows, and this report covers progress relating to each one in turn.

- Staff should continue to work together to develop further approaches to reviewing what they do and what they do next. They should ensure that priorities are well-planned and appropriately paced.

- Continue to improve approaches to planning, assessment and agreeing standards to ensure that all children continue to build on their learning. Teachers should continue to ensure that children make the best possible progress across all areas of the curriculum.
- Continue to develop the curriculum to ensure it is relevant and progressive and takes account of the local context. Staff should develop further a rationale for the curriculum, based on developing skills for learning, life and work.

Profile of the ELC

ELC	Pentland ELC	Learning Community	Firrhill		
Roll	51	Care Experienced %:	2%		
SIMD 1 and 2 %:	12%	% EAL	10%		
Scrutiny Grades		QI 1.3	QI 2.3	QI 3.1	QI 3.2
HMIE ELC (date published) - March 2019		4	4	5	4
ELC Standards & Qualities - June 2023		4	4	5	4

Inclusion Data

No of Pupils with ASN	No of EAL Pupils	No of Care Experienced Pupils	No of Young Carer Pupils	No of Complex Needs
0	5	1	0	0

Care Inspectorate for ELC (1st March 2019)

Quality of Care and Support	6 - Excellent
Quality of Environment	6 - Excellent
Quality of Staffing	Not assessed
Quality of Management and Leadership	Not assessed

Profile of the school

School	Pentland PS	Learning Community	Firrhill		
Roll	506	Care Experienced %:	2 %		
SIMD 1 and 2 %:	9 %	% EAL	11 %		
Scrutiny Grades		QI 1.3	QI 2.3	QI 3.1	QI 3.2
HMIE Primary (date published) - March 2019		4	4	5	5
School Standards & Qualities - June 2023		4	4	5	5

Inclusion Data

No of Pupils with ASN	No of EAL Pupils	No of Care Experienced Pupils	No of Young Carer Pupils	No of Complex Needs	No of pupils with attendance below 85%	No of Exclusions 22-23	No of Exclusions 23-24	No of Flexible Timetables
54	55	9	8	0	26	0	0	0

Achievement of a Level Data 2022/23

Reading			Writing			Listening & Talking			Numeracy		
P1	P4	P7	P1	P4	P7	P1	P4	P7	P1	P4	P7
87.7%	88.9%	93.4%	84.2%	82.5%	90.2%	96.5%	87.3%	93.4%	93%	85.7%	91.8%

Focus Tool

Comparator Schools for all stages	Reading	Writing	Listening & Talking	Numeracy
Pentland Primary School	90%	86%	92%	90%
Duddingston Primary School	82%	80%	88%	82%
Dean Park Primary School	96%	93%	99%	95%
Oxgangs Primary School	84%	81%	90%	85%
Currie Primary School	84%	83%	86%	90%
Towerbank Primary School	88%	84%	94%	88%
East Craigs Primary School	84%	76%	91%	84%
Wardie Primary School	90%	92%	98%	93%
Davidson's Mains Primary School	89%	82%	92%	90%
Nether Currie Primary School	89%	89%	97%	91%
Bonaly Primary School	95%	91%	98%	95%

Stretch Aims 23-24

Q1			Q5			Literacy			Numeracy		
Total	Lit Q1	Num Q1	Total	Lit Q5	Num Q5	Q1	Q5	Gap	Q1	Q5	Gap
19	6	5	137	19	12	32%	14%	-18%	26%	9%	-17%

Follow Through Report

Overview of the learning experience

During the local authority follow-through visit in November 2023, the visiting team witnessed positive and nurturing relationships between staff and children in all learning experiences visited across the setting. Almost all children were motivated, engaged and keen to talk about their learning.

In most classes, learning intentions and success criteria were shared which were relevant to the learning. In most classes, questioning was used to check and assess understanding of key concepts. The next step in this area will be to consider how to develop consistency in practice across all classes.

In the ELC, children experienced a wide range of experiences and spaces with clear opportunities to apply skills taught within play contexts.

Where support staff were working with classes, they worked effectively with children and provided high-quality support to groups and individuals.

Area for improvement 1: Staff should continue to work together to develop further approaches to reviewing what they do and what they do next. They should ensure that priorities are well-planned and appropriately paced.

Strengths

Within the school and ELC there is a strong staff team with a very positive ethos. All staff spoken to felt valued, well led and supported. ELC staff are part of whole-school improvement groups and comment that collaboration between ELC and school has increased resulting in a sense of shared purpose and joint culture for improvement.

The SLT are strong and dynamic. They provide meaningful leadership opportunities for staff and children across the setting. Children shared that they were proud to be part of leadership groups in the school focussing on equalities, digital learning and sustainability.

School improvement priorities have been identified in collaboration with staff which has resulted in a clear and focused Improvement Plan and a robust Quality Assurance calendar supporting both the school and the ELC self-evaluation process. Through the process of self-evaluation staff are encouraged to reflect on practice and then make changes which have a positive impact on children's learning.

Improvements are well planned, transparent and appropriately paced ensuring that all staff feel part of the process for continuous improvement.

Next steps

Develop structured opportunities for children and parents to contribute to the self-evaluation processes already in place in school and collaborate on identifying improvement priorities.

Area for improvement 2: Continue to improve approaches to planning, assessment and agreeing standards to ensure that all children continue to build on their learning. Teachers should continue to ensure that children make the best possible progress across all areas of the curriculum.

Strengths

Whilst Covid did initially impact attainment following on from school closures, particularly with the P4 and P7 cohorts, recovery planning has ensured that attainment has now recovered to be in line with pre-pandemic levels for almost all cohorts. P1 data for literacy and numeracy has remained relatively constant. P7 data showed a dip after home learning for both literacy and numeracy, however, levels have returned to pre-pandemic levels in almost all measures. P4 attainment was lower than pre-pandemic levels for last session, however November predictions for the present cohort show an increasing trend and is now above pre-pandemic levels. The school is continuing to focus on improving outcomes for all learners.

The approaches to Planning, Assessment and Tracking of children's progress within ELC have been adapted through staff engagement with the CEC refreshed guidance.

Data is used across the setting to track attainment, achievement and build the learning profile of each class. This includes information about protected characteristics to ensure learning and teaching strategies are appropriate and equitable. This is supporting a balance between Intentional and Responsive planning based on the interests and needs of the children.

The staff know their children well and know them as learners. Class teachers and practitioners in ELC are engaged with the planning and assessment process and meet with Senior Leaders three times a year to discuss progress of individuals and cohorts. This has provided a more rigorous approach to assessing progress and meeting learners' needs. There is now a reported greater understanding of standards with an increase in the careful planning and monitoring of universal and targeted interventions which is having a positive impact on the attainment of individuals and cohorts.

Staff engage in professional learning which focusses on developing and enhancing learning, teaching and assessment approaches alongside The Teachers' Charter. Time is provided to allow staff to look inwards, outwards and forwards to continue to meet the needs of their children.

Learning and teaching development across the school is based on Assessment is for Learning principles using Edinburgh Learns frameworks and strategy rich in its design. Staff work collaboratively to develop programmes of work across stages to support and challenge learners across all areas of the curriculum.

Next steps

Ensure that opportunities within play and flexible routines provide an increased level of challenge for children.

Now that the school is developing consistency across the stages, they should consider developing a wider range of approaches to differentiation and more opportunities for learners to lead the learning.

Area for improvement 3: Continue to develop the curriculum to ensure it is relevant and progressive and takes account of the local context. Staff should develop further a rationale for the curriculum, based on developing skills for learning, life and work.

Strengths

The staff team know their local context and they plan for experiences and opportunities built on this knowledge.

A recent priority of the school has been ensuring that the curriculum is equitable for all children. Financial barriers are reduced through Pupil Equity Funding to ensure that opportunities are open to all. The school ensures that they celebrate diversity and children were able to talk about events celebrated by different cultures as well as displays being evident in learning spaces.

Literacy, Numeracy and Health and Wellbeing are core features of the curriculum. The staff have continued to develop meaningful Outdoor Learning experiences with regular visits to the forest to support this for all children across the setting.

Staff plan a wide range of learning experiences and opportunities within the curriculum based on skills. This includes links to the Career Education Standard through the 'This is because' part of each lesson, this was observed in some classes during the visit.

Parents are welcomed and included into the ELC and school through regular stay and play, family events, forest experiences and learning events. Parents shared that they enjoy these and are glad that they have returned to being an integral part of the school calendar.

Next steps

Consider how to maximise the wide range of opportunities through enriched play areas ensuring children have less interruptions and are able to apply and revisit their play and learning.

Continue to plan for the development of skills across the four contexts of learning using these to enhance success criteria and plan for progression.

Summary

The Quality Improvement Education team found that Pentland Primary School and ELC had made appropriate progress in all three areas highlighted by Education Scotland in 2020. The Quality Improvement Education Officers for the school and the ELC will continue to work with the Head Teacher to provide support and to challenge progress across the school and this will continue to be reported to parents and carers through the Standards and Quality reports at the end of each session.

The review team agree with the Standards & Quality Self-evaluation grades.