

## ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

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<b>COMMITTEE</b>	Education and Children's Services Committee
<b>DATE</b>	24 January 2023
<b>EXEMPT</b>	No
<b>CONFIDENTIAL</b>	No
<b>REPORT TITLE</b>	Inspection Reporting
<b>REPORT NUMBER</b>	CFS/23/009
<b>DIRECTOR</b>	Eleanor Sheppard
<b>CHIEF OFFICER</b>	Shona Milne
<b>REPORT AUTHOR</b>	Eleanor Sheppard
<b>TERMS OF REFERENCE</b>	1.1.1

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### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report details how Aberdeen City schools and Early Learning and Childcare settings have engaged with His Majesty's Inspectors of Education (HMIE) and The Care Inspectorate since November 2022.

### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee:-

- 2.1 notes the content of this report;
- 2.2 instructs the Chief Education Officer to continue to support Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) settings and schools to implement continuous improvement in keeping with the Quality Frameworks; and
- 2.3 instructs the Chief Education Officer to monitor progress against the Action Plan put in place to realise improvements at Kingsford Early Learning and Childcare provision and report progress towards achieving the actions within 2 committee cycles.

### 3. CURRENT SITUATION

#### **Education Scotland inspection of Danestone Primary School**

- 3.1 His Majesty's Inspectors of Education (HMIE) has resumed their full inspection regime. Danestone Primary School and Nursery class were inspected using the short model of inspection week beginning 31<sup>st</sup> October 2022.

During the visit, Inspectors talked to parents/carers and children, worked closely with the headteacher and staff and visited classrooms to see how children were being supported. Taking this approach enabled them to triangulate evidence to support their evaluations. The inspection team found the following strengths in the school's work:

- The positive and supportive environment in the school and nursery, where children's rights and learner participation are key features. Primary children have a very good knowledge of their rights and relate this well to different areas of learning.
- Senior leaders take a proactive approach to improving the quality of learning and teaching across the primary classes. They do this through the use of team teaching, modelling lessons and working together with staff to provide relevant professional learning.
- Children across the school and nursery who are confident, respectful, motivated and keen to learn.

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

- Staff should continue to improve the consistency and quality of learning and teaching across the school and nursery. In doing so, they should ensure all children are challenged sufficiently in their learning and play.
- Practitioners, in the nursery, need to deepen their understanding of how children develop and learn through the use of Curriculum for Excellence. In doing so, they should improve their approaches to capturing and recording children's progress.

The school secured positive gradings against the Quality Indicators.

<b>Primary school Quality Indicators</b>	<b>Evaluation</b>
Learning, teaching and assessment	Good (4)
Raising attainment and achievement	Good (4)
<b>ELC Quality Indicators</b>	<b>Evaluation</b>
Learning, teaching and assessment	Satisfactory (3)
Securing children's progress	Satisfactory (3)

The Inspection team validated the school self-evaluation and encouraged the staff team to continue to implement the School Improvement Plan already agreed with their school community. The full report is available [here](#).

### 3.2 **Care Inspectorate**

The Care Inspectorate continue to inspect on a risk basis, leading to a higher proportion of settings being inspected where complaints or issues have been raised with them. Engagement includes a mix of in person and digital engagement although expectations are consistent with those in place prior to the pandemic.

### 3.3 **West Park Out of School Care**, is an Aberdeen City Council run Out of School Care Service, operating from Westpark Primary School. It is registered for a maximum of 24 primary school aged children at one time. The inspectors noted that staff were very friendly, kind, and caring and were very good at developing meaningful relationships with the children and their families. Inspectors noted that the children were relaxed and confident with staff and that the children's interests and preferences were considered when

planning activities and resources. Children were having fun and taking part in activities they really enjoyed, including daily opportunities to play outdoors.

Aspect being inspected	Evaluation
Quality of care and support	Very good (5)
Quality of environment	Very good (5)
Quality of staffing	Very good (5)
Quality of management and leadership	Good (4)

A link to the full report is available [here](#). The staff team are delighted with the gradings which are testament to their hard work and dedication to providing children and families with a high-quality service.

- 3.4 **Countesswells Out of School Care**, is another Aberdeen City Council run Out of School Care Service. It operates from Countesswells Primary School, in what was Hazlewood School, and was inspected in October 2022. The service is registered to provide care to a maximum of 24 children at any one time, of whom no more than 18 are primary school aged and no more than six are secondary pupils with additional support needs. The Inspectors noted that children were cared for by nurturing, knowledgeable staff, who knew the children and families very well. Children felt valued and included and had access to a wealth of play opportunities and to an extensive safe and enclosed outdoor play space.

Aspect being inspected	Evaluation
How good is our care, play and learning?	Very good (5)
How good is our setting?	Very good (5)
How good is our leadership?	Very good (5)
How good is our staff team?	Very good (5)

A link to the full report is available [here](#). The staff team are delighted with the gradings, which are testament to their efforts and commitment to delivering a high quality and inclusive out of school care service, and the positive partnership between staff, children and their families.

- 3.5 **Kingsford ELC provision** was inspected in September 2022 following an incident where a child left the service unobserved by staff. Although Inspectors found that the Aberdeen City led provision had staff who were warm and welcoming to the children, a number of issues were identified which have been addressed since the inspection.

Aspect being inspected	Evaluation
How good is our care, play and learning?	Weak (2)

How good is our setting?	Weak (2)
How good is our leadership?	Weak (2)
How good is our staff team?	Weak (2)

A link to the full report is available [here](#). External expertise has been secured to build confidence in the changing staff team and a more confident and positive team dynamic is helping to positively drive improvement. The Education Service continues to work closely with the Senior Leadership team to secure continuous improvement. An Action Plan to support further and on-going improvement is available in Appendix A. A document outlining progress made to date is available [here](#).

- 3.6 **Fernielea ELC provision**, an Aberdeen City run provision, was inspected in October 2022. Inspectors found that children were supported by staff who knew and responded to their needs very well and that the children benefited from strong partnership arrangements in place. Staff worked hard to establish positive and trusting relationships with families and children benefited from engaging in a range of play experiences which were child led and reflected their interests. A range of effective systems were in place which supported a culture of continuous improvement.

Aspect being inspected	Evaluation
How good is our care, play and learning?	Very Good (5)
How good is our setting?	Good (4)
How good is our leadership?	Good (4)
How good is our staff team?	Very Good (5)

The full report is available [here](#). The staff team are delighted that the gradings from February have now been upgraded and feel that these better reflect the work of the service.

- 3.7 **Cults primary ELC Provision**, an Aberdeen City run provision, was inspected in November. The Inspector noted that children received nurturing care and support from staff who know them very well. Children were developing their curiosity, imagination and problem solving skills through high quality play experiences in a stimulating environment. Self-evaluation was taking place and supporting continuous improvement. The children benefitted from a caring and passionate staff team who use their knowledge and experience to support positive outcomes. The inspectors noted that the quality of recorded information could be improved to support children's health needs and ensure consistent and effective care.

Aspect being inspected	Evaluation 22
How good is our care, play and learning?	Good (4)
How good is our setting?	Very good (5)
How good is our leadership?	Good (4)
How good is our staff team?	Very Good (5)

A link to the full report is available [here](#). The staff team have addressed the concerns identified around paperwork and continue to secure further improvement through their effective use of self-evaluation.

- 3.8 **Thrive Childcare and Education, Happitots, Cove Bay**, a funded provider setting, was inspected in October. The inspectors noted that Children benefited from interactions with staff which were nurturing, caring and kind. Children experienced a warm atmosphere as staff had positive working relationships and had developed trusting relationships with children and families. Children benefitted from a safe and secure environment. Children were supported by motivated and enthusiastic staff. The inspectors noted that quality assurance and self-evaluation processes were in the early stages, this should now be a priority for the management team to ensure improvements are sustained and processes embedded.

Aspect being inspected	Evaluation 22
How good is our care, play and learning?	Good (4)
How good is our setting?	Good (4)
How good is our leadership?	Good (4)
How good is our staff team?	Good (4)

A link to the full report is available [here](#). The staff team are delighted that their grades have improved and continue to embed their approaches to quality assurance and self-evaluation to ensure improvements are sustained.

- 3.9 **Beech House Nursery, Balnagask Road, Torry**, a funded provider setting, was inspected in November 2022. Inspectors noted that children were happily engaged in activities throughout the whole nursery and were cared for by staff who knew them very well. Staff intuitively stepped in to support children's play ideas when needed or offer challenge to extend their learning. Children were offered high quality experiences, which enriched their play and learning. Effective quality assessments were at the heart of the service and used to effectively promote all aspects of child development. Staff language, manner and approach when talking to children was caring and respectful. The

management team ensured that high quality learning through play is at the heart of improvement planning.

How good is our care, play and learning?	Good (5)
How good is our setting?	Adequate (4)
How good is our leadership?	Good (5)
How good is our staff team?	Good (4)

A link to the full report is available [here](#).

- 3.10 The education service continue to support ELC settings to improve quality and have action plans in place to drive improvement where appropriate.

#### 4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

#### 5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no legal implications arising from the recommendations in this report,

#### 6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 No negative environmental impacts have been identified.

#### 7. RISK

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H)  *taking into account controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
<b>Strategic Risk</b>	Risk of not improving outcomes for learners	Positive engagement with Inspection agencies and sharing learning across the system where appropriate.	L	Yes
<b>Compliance</b>	Risk of not complying with national guidance	Positive engagement with Inspection agencies and sharing learning across the	L	Yes

		system where appropriate.		
<b>Operational</b>	Risk that schools/ELC settings do not accurately identify the areas for improvement that will make the greatest difference to learners	Quality assurance arrangements in place to validate self-evaluation gradings	L	Yes
<b>Financial</b>	No risks identified			
<b>Reputational</b>	Risk that poor quality of provision will present a reputational risk to the Council	High levels of assurance are taken Quality Improvement and Inspection visits	L	Yes
<b>Environment / Climate</b>	No risks identified			

## 8. OUTCOMES

<u><a href="#">COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN</a></u>	
	<b>Impact of Report</b>
<p><b>Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement</b></p> <p>Commit to realising the potential of each individual, by seeking to widen curriculum choice and implement progressive choices.</p> <p>Commit to closing the attainment gap in education while working with partners across the city.</p>	<p>External scrutiny provides helpful assurance that there is sufficient focus on helping young people recover from the pandemic and that the school self-evaluation and improvement plan is well positioned to support a closing of the poverty related attainment gap.</p>
<u><a href="#">Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan</a></u>	
<p>Prosperous People - 95% of all our children, including those living in our priority neighbourhoods, will sustain</p>	<p>Engagement with inspectors provides an opportunity to learn from national best practice and validate self-evaluation evidence available in schools. The support and challenge received by Inspectors helps</p>

a positive destination upon leaving school by 2026	to shape improvement plans for the coming sessions in keeping with the LOIP stretch aims.
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Regional and City Strategies</b></p>	
Regional Cultural Strategy	Engagement with the Inspectorate is fully aligned to the city prevention strategy. Work to address poverty and improvement in the Children's services plan, the Child Poverty Action Plan and the National Improvement Framework Plan is also supported through external scrutiny.
Prevention Strategy	
Children's Services Plan	
National Improvement Framework Plan	

## 9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
<b>Integrated Impact Assessment</b>	Not required
<b>Data Protection Impact Assessment</b>	Not required
<b>Other</b>	None

## 10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

## 11. APPENDICES

Appendix A – Action Plan for Kingsford ELC provision

## 12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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