

## ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

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<b>COMMITTEE</b>	Education and Children's Services Committee
<b>DATE</b>	12 September 2023
<b>EXEMPT</b>	No
<b>CONFIDENTIAL</b>	No
<b>REPORT TITLE</b>	Inspection Reporting
<b>REPORT NUMBER</b>	CFS/23/234
<b>DIRECTOR</b>	Eleanor Sheppard
<b>CHIEF OFFICER</b>	Shona Milne/ Graeme Simpson
<b>REPORT AUTHOR</b>	Shona Milne / Graeme Simpson
<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 and had a report published since July 2023.

### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee: -

- 2.1 notes the content of this report; and
- 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 Framework agreed at Committee in July 2023.

### 3. CURRENT SITUATION

#### 3.1 Care Inspectorate Inspections

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.

- 3.2 **Flexible Childcare Services Cummings Park** was inspected in May 2023. Inspectors noted improvements had been made and the service had met the majority of requirements from the previous inspection. The manager and staff were observed to be committed to supporting the continuous improvement of the service, this was reflected in their self-evaluation and ongoing improvement plan. Inspectors noted that staff were kind and had developed positive relationships with the children and their families in their care. This led to an improved ethos.

Children were cared for in a bright and welcoming environment. Improvements to the sleeping arrangements meant children were able to relax, rest, and sleep

in a comfortable and safe space. Although children were offered nutritious and healthy lunches improvements could be made to ensure children experience consistent high quality mealtimes.

Inspectors felt that the deployment of staffing could be improved further to ensure children were provided with the care and support needed to help them reach their full potential.

Aspect being inspected	Evaluation
How good is our care, play and learning?	Adequate (3)
How good is our setting?	Weak (2)
How good is our leadership?	Adequate (3)
How good is our staff team?	Adequate (3)

The team were disappointed with the grades but acknowledged that there are still improvements to be made. The setting will remain in the intensive support category of the Quality Improvement Framework. The service will remain on a Service Improvement Period (SIP) until their next inspection. The updated plan to address recommendations can be found at Appendix A.

A link to the full report can be found [here](#)

- 3.3 **Glashieburn ELC**, an Aberdeen City run provision, was inspected in May 2023. Inspectors noted that children were cared for by nurturing, patient, kind staff who knew children well, showing respect for their individuality, needs and wishes. Children were cared for in pleasant, comfortable surroundings. Requirements in respect to the safety of the environment, made at the previous inspection, had been met. Opportunities for children to learn and develop new skills were embedded throughout the setting, where a culture of continuous improvement supported positive experiences and outcomes for children. Staff were well supported by management to work as a team in delivering high quality provision.

Aspect being inspected	Evaluation
How good is our care, play and learning?	Good (4)
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)

The team were delighted with the report which highlights their hard work and achievements. The team agreed to review the lunchtime routine as part of their ongoing evaluation to ensure consistency for all children. Glashieburn will sit within the universal support category of the Quality Improvement Framework.

A link to the full inspection report can be found [here](#)

- 3.4 **Kittybrewster ELC**, an Aberdeen City run provision was inspected in May 2023. Inspectors noted that some children had fun during their play, and many

enjoyed forming friendships. The setting was comfortable with good quality furnishings for children. Transitions, including mealtimes, were not well planned for and were often task oriented. Staff were not always aware of important information held within children's personal plans. Quality assurance was not yet leading to significant improvements in outcomes for children.

Aspect being inspected	Evaluation
How good is our care, play and learning?	Weak (2)
How good is our setting?	Good (4)
How good is our leadership?	Adequate (3)
How good is our staff team?	Weak (2)

Although some areas of strength were identified, there were areas for improvement identified. The setting will now work on robust self-evaluation and quality assurance processes to ensure improved outcomes for children and their families. The service will be placed in the intensive support category of the Quality Improvement Framework. The action plan is available at Appendix B.

A link to the full inspection report can be found [here](#)

- 3.5 **Milltimber ELC**, an Aberdeen City run provision, was inspected in June 2023. Inspectors noted that staff were kind, supportive and knew the children very well. Children were confident, happy, independent and had fun playing with their friends. Children benefitted from playing and learning in a stimulating, purpose-built nursery where staff worked together to create a welcoming environment for children and families.

Robust quality assurance processes were in place for the continual improvement of the service, this included self-evaluation and staff monitoring. Managers will continue to support staff in developing their observation skills to help plan next steps for children to ensure progression in learning.

Aspect being inspected	Evaluation
How good is our care, play and learning?	Good (4)
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)

The team were delighted with the report which highlights their hard work and achievements. The team will continue to work on their observation skills and planning for progression in learning. Milltimber will sit within the universal support category of the Quality Improvement Framework.

The link to the full report can be found [here](#)

- 3.6 **Walker Road ELC**, an Aberdeen City run provision, was inspected in June 2023. Inspectors noted that quality assurance processes were starting to make a positive impact on the service and there had been improvements since the last inspection however these need to continue. They found most children were

cared for by nurturing staff who responded quickly and thoughtfully to children's changing needs.

Inspectors commented on the organisation of lunchtime which supported children to have a positive experience and increase their independence skills. Although children engaged positively in learning opportunities, they would benefit from a more personalised approach which includes greater challenge and differentiation to reflect their age and stage of development.

Inspectors noted that the garden area had been significantly improved and children enjoyed playing there. To ensure all children are supervised and kept safe, staff require to more consistently communicate with each other. Areas accessible from the setting require to be made secure to avoid children accessing them without adult supervision.

Aspect being inspected	Evaluation
How good is our care, play and learning?	Adequate (3)
How good is our setting?	Weak (2)
How good is our leadership?	Adequate (3)
How good is our staff team?	Adequate (3)

Since the inspection all areas adjacent to the playroom are now inaccessible to children unless accompanied by an adult. Staff will continue to drive improvements forward and continue to address the requirements. Staff are looking forward to the move to the purpose built ELC within the new Greyhope School building. Walker Road will remain in the intensive support category within the Quality Improvement Framework and the updated action plan is available at Appendix C.

The full report can be found [here](#)

- 3.7 Kirkhill ELC**, an Aberdeen City run provision, was inspected in July 2023. This was the second full inspection in 6 weeks. Care Inspectorate would normally offer a support visit due to the poor grades however, due to timings, this had not been possible. Inspectors noted that improvements had been made to standards of cleanliness and staff were more confident in infection, prevention and control measures.

Inspectors commented on the enthusiasm and kind and caring nature of staff however they felt there was a need for quality assurance processes to be further embedded to ensure continuous improvement and good outcomes for children.

Inspectors noted that the indoor and outdoor environments required further improvement.

Aspect being inspected	Evaluation
How good is our care, play and learning?	Adequate (3)
How good is our setting?	Weak (2)
How good is our leadership?	Adequate (3)
How good is our staff team?	Adequate (3)

Since the inspection the recommendations around the environment have been addressed by corporate landlord. Inspectors could see progress was being made. Staff will continue to drive forward improvements and work to address unmet requirements. The updated Action Plan is available in Appendix D.

The full report can be found [here](#)

3.7 The education service continues to support ELC and School Age Childcare settings to improve quality and have action plans in place to drive improvement where appropriate.

3.8 The variation in inspection outcomes is being addressed through a revision of approaches to quality improvement and an alignment of professional learning opportunities to the core Quality Indicators. The proposed approach was endorsed at the July meeting of the Education and Children's Services Committee.

### 3.9 **Children's Social Work**

In June 2023 the Care Inspectorate intimated their intention on behalf of the Scottish Government to undertake a Disabled Children and Young People Thematic Review. The thematic review will involve all 32 local authorities. The reporting on the inspection findings will be on a national basis and the Care Inspectorate intend to publish their report in the summer of 2024.

3.10 As part of the thematic inspection the Care Inspectorate will undertake a 'deeper dive' across four partnership areas. Aberdeen City have agreed to be one of these areas and this will involve a range of inspection activities predominantly over November 2023 – February 2024. It will include a level of file reading; meeting with children, young people, and families in receipt of support/services as well as meeting with relevant staff.

## 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 system where appropriate.	L	Yes
<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

<b><u>COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN</u></b>	
<b>Impact of Report</b>	
<b>Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement</b>	External scrutiny provides helpful assurance that there is sufficient focus on helping young people

<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>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>
<p><b><u><a href="#">Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan</a></u></b></p>	
<p>Prosperous People - 95% of all our children, including those living in our priority neighbourhoods, will sustain a positive destination upon leaving school by 2026.</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 to shape improvement plans for the coming sessions in keeping with the LOIP stretch aims.</p>
<p><b>Regional and City Strategies</b></p> <p>Regional Cultural Strategy</p> <p>Prevention Strategy</p> <p>Children’s Services Plan</p> <p>National Improvement Framework Plan</p>	<p>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.</p>

## 9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
<b>Integrated Impact Assessment</b>	A stage 1 integrated impact assessment has been completed and submitted as part of this report.
<b>Data Protection Impact Assessment</b>	No DPIA is required.
<b>Other</b>	

## 10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

## 11. APPENDICES

Appendix A – FCCS Cummings Park Improvement Plan

Appendix B – Kittybrewster CI Action Plan  
Appendix C – Walker Road CI Improvement Plan  
Appendix D – Kirkhill CI Action Plan

## 12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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