



Report to Buchan Area Committee – 13th November 2018

Education Scotland Inspection, Pitfour Primary School

1 Recommendations

The Committee is recommended to:

- 1.1 Consider and comment on the contents of the report;**
- 1.2 Endorse the Services continuing efforts in support of its school in the Education Scotland inspection process and in the raising of standards of attainment and achievement in all aspects of school life;**
- 1.3 Agree to the further reports on Education Scotland school inspections being presented.**

2 Background / Discussion

- 2.1 In May 2018 HM Inspectors visited Pitfour School and in August 2018, they published a letter outlining the findings of their visit to Pitfour School and Nursery Class.
- 2.2 The school inspection evaluated key aspects of the work of the school at all stages including: -
 - Self-evaluation for self-improvement
 - Raising attainment and achievement

The school inspection evaluated key aspects of the work of the Nursery class including: -

- Self-evaluation for self-improvement
 - Securing children's progress
- 2.3 As a result of the inspection, the Inspectors highlighted the following key strengths of Pitfour School –
 - Staff work together as a team very well, sharing practice and supporting each other to improve learning, teaching and assessment, and to raise children's attainment and achievement.
 - The school provides an inclusive, caring ethos for children and their families. Children enjoy school, and are enthusiastic, articulate and motivated to learn.
 - Relationships with staff, children and parents are positive and supportive. Children are well supported to learn, and have a wide range of opportunities provided by the school to develop their wider achievements.

2.4 The inspection model is based on the school’s own self-evaluation and how this is used to focus on improving outcomes for young people. Over the course of the inspection process, the inspectors arrive at their own overall evaluations for the school in relation to the two Quality Indicators used in this new short inspection format. (Further details for the two Quality Indicators can be found in Appendix 1). In Pitfour School, the Inspectors’ evaluation was as follows:

Quality Indicators for the Primary School	Evaluation
Self-evaluation for self-improvement	Satisfactory
Raising attainment and achievement	Good

Quality Indicators for the Nursery Class	Evaluation
Self-evaluation for self-improvement	Satisfactory
Securing children’s progress	Satisfactory

2.5 Inspectors also identified three areas where they felt the school should focus in order to improve the quality of education. These were:

- The head teacher now needs to develop a clear strategic direction for the school underpinned by self-evaluation to ensure it is continuously improving, and that changes being made are well-planned to improve outcomes for all children.
- Involve all stakeholders fully in well planned and meaningful self-evaluation activities, and in decision making about school improvement priorities.
- Develop planned opportunities for all children to take on leadership of their learning more, enabling them to progressively develop their skills for learning, life and work.

2.6 The action plan to address these areas for improvement and to support the implementation of new approaches and practices is incorporated into the school improvement planning documents for the session 2018-19.

- Re-establish strategic approaches to self-evaluation and further develop skills for effective use of planning to support continuous improvement of learning outcomes for all children based on local and national guidelines.
- Develop mechanisms for all stakeholders to fully involve them in meaningful self-evaluation activities.
- Expand opportunities for all children to develop their skills and ability to take on progressive leadership of their own learning.
- Continue to develop skills in literacy through Talk Boost and Emergent Literacy in the early stages.
- Continue to develop numeracy across the school through Number Talks and Maths Mastery.

- Emotion coaching to be introduced with all staff to assist with a commonality of approach to the methodology of dealing with the expected conduct of pupils for the smooth operation of all aspects of school life.
- 2.7 The Head Teacher will provide parents/guardians with an update on progress in the implementation of the plan as part of its annual standards and quality reporting arrangement and through ongoing dialogue with the Parent Council.
- 2.8 The inspectors are confident that the school has the capacity to continue to improve and so will make no more visits in connection with this inspection. Aberdeenshire Council will inform parents/carers about the school's progress as part of its arrangements for reporting on the quality of its schools.
- 2.9 The Head of Finance and Monitoring Officer within Business Services have been consulted in the preparation of this report and had no comment to make and are satisfied that the report complies with the Scheme of Governance and relevant legislation.
- 2.10 The school is well supported by parents and the wider community and the school will involve and seek the views of all stakeholders in their improvement agenda. The Education Scotland report has been shared with parents.

3 Scheme of Governance

- 3.1 The Committee is able to consider and take a decision on this item in terms of Section B.1.2 of the List of Committee Powers in Part 2A of the Scheme of Governance as it relates to a matter of performance in relation to attainment and achievement which impacts on the Buchan Area.

4 Implications and Risk

- 4.1 An equality impact assessment is not required because the actions will not have a differential impact on any of the protected characteristics.
- 4.2 There are no staffing, financial or policy implications arising directly from this report. It is intended that any costs will be met from existing budgets.
- 4.3 The following Risks have been identified as relevant to this matter on a Strategic Level:

Learning, Teaching and Curriculum: We will improve learning and teaching and the quality of the curriculum in our schools, early years and other learning establishments to deliver better outcomes for learners.

Raising Attainment & Closing the Gap: We will take the evidence based approaches to raise levels of attainment and achievement and close the gap which sees children and young people living in relative deprivation attaining less well. This will involve raising the bar in terms of our expectations at every level, including the leadership and professionalism of our staff, and of what all our learners can achieve.

- 4.4 A Town Centre Impact Assessment has been considered but is not required as there will be no impact on any of the towns detailed within the Town Centre First Principle.

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Director of Education & Children's Services

Report prepared by: Gwen Coull, Head Teacher
Date 28th October 2018

APPENDIX 1

How Good is our School (4th Edition)

Quality Indicators

1.1 Self-Evaluation for Self-Improvement

Themes:

- Collaborative approaches to self-evaluation
- Analysis and evaluation of intelligence and data
- Impact on learners' successes and achievements

This indicator defines rigorous self-evaluation as a responsibility of all stakeholders. It highlights the importance of partnership approaches to self-evaluation and continuous improvement. It emphasizes the need for strong leadership and robust analysis of a range of intelligence and data as essential features of effective continuous self-improvement. A key factor in this indicator is demonstrating the impact of self-evaluation in relation to outcomes for all learners. Their active participation in self-evaluation is therefore essential.

3.2 Raising Attainment and Achievement

Themes:

- Attainment in literacy and numeracy
- Attainment over time
- Overall quality of learners' achievement
- Equity for all learners

This indicator focuses on the school's success in achieving the best possible outcomes for all learners. Success is measured in attainment across all areas of the curriculum and through the school's ability to demonstrate learners' achievements in relation to skills and attributes. Continuous improvement or sustained high standards over time is a key feature of this indicator.

How good is our early learning and childcare?

Quality Indicators

1.1 Self-Evaluation for Self-Improvement

Themes:

- Collaborative approaches to self-evaluation
- Evidence-based improvement
- Ensuring impact of success for children and families

This indicator underlines that rigorous self-evaluation is the responsibility of all practitioners and stakeholders. It highlights the importance of partnership approaches to self-evaluation and continuous improvement. It emphasises the need for strong leadership and a shared understanding of strengths and areas for development. A key factor is how to demonstrate the impact of self-evaluation and how evidence is used to improve outcomes for children.

3.2 Securing Childrens' progress

Themes:

- Progress in communication, early language, mathematics and health and wellbeing
- Children's progress over time
- Overall quality of children's achievement
- Ensuring equity for all children

This indicator relates to the development and learning of babies, toddlers and young children. It requires clear understanding of early learning and development and pedagogy. It reflects the integrated way young children learn and the importance of experiences and development happening on an individual basis within a supportive, nurturing and stimulating environment. High quality early learning and childcare contributes significantly to enhancing children's progress and achievement as they grow and learn. It can benefit all children by closing the attainment gap and ensuring equity for all. It is about the holistic nature of development and learning ensuring these foundations are secure in order to achieve future attainment success.