

REPORT TO BUCHAN AREA COMMITTEE – 4 June 2019

EDUCATION SCOTLAND INSPECTION – New Deer Primary School and Nursery

1 Recommendations

The Committee is recommended to:

- 1. consider and comment on the contents of the report;**
- 2. endorse the Service's 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; and**
- 3. agree to further reports on Education Scotland school inspections being presented**

2 Background / Discussion

- 2.1 New Deer School was inspected in February 2019 by HMIE Scotland and the Care Inspectorate.
- 2.2 During the visit, they talked to parents/carers and young people and worked closely with the Head Teacher and staff. They gathered evidence to evaluate the quality of –
 - Teaching, Learning and Assessment
 - Raising Achievement and Attainment
- 2.3 The inspection team found the following strengths in the school's work.
 - The caring, nurturing and inclusive environment across the school and nursery. This is enabling children to be confident, responsible and ready to learn.
 - The strong teamwork of staff, and the very effective relationships across the school community, which is creating a purposeful focus on improvement.
 - The effective and creative use of digital technology which is embedded in the curriculum. This supports and motivates learners.
 - The high level of community involvement in supporting and developing children's skills for learning, life and work across the school and nursery.

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 evaluation for the school in relation to the two quality Indicators reviewed.

In New Deer, the inspectors' evaluation was as follows:

New Deer Primary School

Learning teaching and assessment	Good
Raising attainment and achievement	Good

New Deer Early Learning and Childcare

Learning teaching and assessment	Good
Securing children's progress	Good

Care Inspectorate's gradings for the nursery class were as follows

Quality of care and support	Good
Quality of the environment	Very Good
Quality of staffing	Very Good
Quality of management and leadership	Good

2.5 The following areas for improvement were identified and discussed with the Head Teacher and a Quality Improvement Officer from Aberdeenshire Council.

- Continue to develop approaches to planning, observation and assessment to ensure children make very good progress in their learning from what they already know.
- Develop the strategic use of data to improve further children's attainment and achievement.

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 refreshed school improvement plan going forwards into 2019/2020.

- The Principal Teachers of Early Years and our newly appointed Early Years Senior Practitioner are supporting the nursery staff to improve the quality of their observations of children's learning. Already we see an improvement in the observations, leading to the staff being able to support the children to maximise their successes and achievement.
- Education Scotland praised us on the amount of data we hold on our young people and asked that we further develop the use of this data. This is an area that all schools are being supported in by the authority Quality Improvement Officers and the Quality Assurance and Moderation Support Officers and I, and school staff, have attended training to support us in this area. The data received from the Scottish National Standardised Assessments this year gives much more information on individual pupils, and areas for development in classes and strategically across the whole school, and this will be used to inform school developments next year.

- 2.7 The Head Teacher will provide parents/carers with an update on progress in the implementation of the plan as part of its annual standards and quality reporting arrangements 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.
- 2.9 The Head of Finance and Monitoring Officer within Business Services have been consulted in the preparation of this and are satisfied that the report complies with the Scheme of Governance and relevant legislation.

3 Scheme of Governance

- 3.1 The Committee is able to consider 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 of New Deer which is in 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.

Laurence Findlay
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