

EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Thursday 31 March 2016

Report by Director of Education

EDUCATION SCOTLAND REPORT ON
NETHERLEE PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY CLASS

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. To inform elected members of the outstanding report by Education Scotland on Netherlee Primary School and Nursery Class.

RECOMMENDATIONS

2. Elected members are asked to:

- a) note and comment on the contents of the Education Scotland report on Netherlee Primary School and Nursery Class;
- b) commend the school's achievements by awarding it accreditation from March 2016 until March 2019; and,
- c) approve the Nursery action plan to address the agreed area for improvement.

BACKGROUND

3. Netherlee Primary School and Nursery Class were inspected by a team from Education Scotland in November 2015. The inspection covered key aspects of the work of the school and nursery class and identified particular strengths and areas for improvement using the Education Scotland six-point scale.

4. The inspection team assessed and reported on:

- How well children learn and achieve
- How well the school supports children to develop and learn
- How well the school improves the quality of its work

5. The report was published in March 2016 and is attached as Appendix 1. It has been issued to staff, parents, local elected members and the Convener for Education and Equalities.

REPORT

6. In assessing the indicators of quality in the primary school Education Scotland found two aspects of the work to be excellent, i.e. improvements in performance and learner's experiences; meeting learning needs was judged to be very good. In the primary school and nursery class the curriculum was judged to be very good and improvement through self-evaluation excellent. In the nursery class all three evaluations were judged to be good. The evaluations are included in Appendix 2.

7. The particular strengths highlighted by the inspection team included:

- Articulate, confident, motivated children with high aspirations.
- The outstanding learning experiences of children and the development of their health and wellbeing.
- The effective involvement of parents in the work and life of the school.
- The outstanding approaches to monitor and improve the quality of learning and teaching.
- The very high and improving levels of attainment in literacy and numeracy.
- The excellent leadership of the headteacher and shared leadership of the staff team.

8. This is another outstanding report on an East Renfrewshire school and the judgements made by Education Scotland are very close to the department's evaluation of the quality of provision in Netherlee Primary School and Nursery Class. The department is especially pleased that the leadership of the head teacher has been rightly recognised in the letter to parents/carers, as have the very high and improving levels of attainment in literacy and numeracy.

9. The list of key strengths can be found on page four of the letter to parents/carers.

10. The inspection team agreed with the school and Education Department that the school and nursery class should: Continue to take forward the school's vision and areas for improvement as planned.

11. Given that the school has been judged to be excellent in three areas inspected by Education Scotland there is no need for an additional action plan to address the area for improvement as noted above. The school will continue to use the results of its own self-evaluation to identify priorities for improvement which will be published in its annual standards and quality report and school plan.

12. Appendix 3 of this paper includes the nursery class action plan to address the agreed area for improvement. The Quality Improvement Service will work closely with the nursery class to support its implementation.

13. The department will continue to work in partnership with the head teacher and staff to share the sector leading practices with other schools within East Renfrewshire.

14. Education Scotland will make no further reports in connection with the inspection of Netherlee Primary School and Nursery Class and the Education Department recommends that the school be accredited for its achievements. This will mean that the authority will not carry out any formal quality assurance activities in Netherlee Primary School for a period of 3 years from the date of publication of the report, i.e. until March 2019.

15. The Quality Improvement Service will revisit the Nursery Class within 18 months of the date of publication to review the impact of the school's improvement plan in addressing the agreed areas for improvement and to provide a progress report to parents.

FINANCE AND EFFICIENCY

16. There are no financial or efficiency implications related to this report.

RECOMMENDATIONS

17. Elected members are asked to:

- a) note and comment on the contents of the Education Scotland report on Netherlee Primary School and Nursery Class;
- b) commend the school's achievements by awarding it accreditation from March 2016 until March 2019; and,
- c) approve the Nursery action plan to address the agreed area for improvement.

Mhairi Shaw
Director of Education
31 March 2016

Convener Contact Details

Councillor E Green, Convener for Education and Equalities
Councillor, P O'Kane, Vice Convener for Education and Equalities

Tel: Home 01505 850455
Tel: Mobile 07718 697115

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Report Author

Mark Ratter, Head of Education Services (Quality Improvement and Performance)

Tel: 0141 577 3103

Mark.Ratter@eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk

Background Papers

1. Education Scotland report on Netherlee Primary School and Nursery Class, 8 March 2016

Key Words

Education Scotland
report
Netherlee Primary School and Nursery Class
Accreditation

8 March 2016

Dear Parent/Carer

**Netherlee Primary School and Nursery Class
East Renfrewshire Council**

Recently, as you may know, my colleagues and I inspected your child's school. During our visit, we talked to parents and children and worked closely with the headteacher and staff. We wanted to find out how well children are learning and achieving and how well the school supports children to do their best. The headteacher shared with us the school's successes and priorities for improvement. We looked at some particular aspects of the school's recent work, including improvement in sporting opportunities, 'Big Picture' approach to planning learning and parental involvement in the 'Chooseday Club'. As a result, I was able to find out how good the school is at improving children's education.

How well do children learn and achieve?

There are examples of outstanding practice in the way children learn and achieve. In the nursery, children are happy, settled and interested in the motivating play activities inside and outside. We observed children working well together and concentrating for long periods of time exploring numbers and making 'mud cakes' in the outdoor kitchen. Staff in the nursery are working to improve further children's skills in knowing themselves as learners through a range of approaches including increased involvement with their 'Learning Books'. Across the primary classes, children's experiences are excellent. They benefit from a highly supportive and stimulating environment which motivates them to learn. Children work very well together in a range of situations including independent learning tasks. Through 'Community Learning' they work with children in different stages of the school and explore areas of interest such as 'Japanese culture', 'unusual careers', 'lacrosse' and 'architecture'. They are developing well their knowledge of themselves as learners. For example, children at P1 sent questions to children at P6 about space as part of their science investigation of night and day. Children at P6 chose digital presentations as the most effective way to share their answer with the younger children. The extensive range of out-of-class activities includes the 'Chooseday Club' which is led very well by parents. An impressive range of sporting activities, the symphony orchestra, choir and instrumental groups are well attended and children excel in a motivating environment while developing important skills for life. Success and high aspirations are promoted through displays in the 'achievement alley' and throughout the school. This includes the eye-catching 'Nurner Prize' learning wall and the international links with Pokola Primary in Zambia and a school in Sydney, Australia. Closer to home, the initiative 'Beyond Netherlee' is helping to reinforce expectations by highlighting the successes

and career pathways of former pupils. Children talk in detail about their strengths and next steps in learning literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. The school is continuing to develop further children's knowledge of themselves as learners across all curricular areas.

Overall, most children in the nursery make appropriate progress in early literacy. They listen well in group situations and show a well-developed range of talking skills including a developing awareness of Scots Language through 'talking homework'. Most recognise environmental print such as 'STOP' and 'GO' and a few can create their own signs. In early numeracy, most children make appropriate progress and are confident with numbers to ten. We asked the school to continue to develop children's skills in early literacy and early numeracy across learning in a range of real life contexts. Netherlee is a very large primary school and the impact of the improvement plan on the high numbers of children is noteworthy. As a result, over the past three years, the improvements in children's attainment and achievements are outstanding. Data provided by the school and Education Authority shows very high and steadily increasing levels of progress for children in literacy and numeracy. In addition, the development of successful, confident, and responsible children through participation and achievement in sports and the performing arts is excellent. Overall, almost all children at the primary stages make very good progress from previous levels of attainment in numeracy and mathematics and in literacy and English. Across the school, there are plans to improve further approaches to moderation and continue the progress already made to improve children's skills in problem solving. Children listen well to each other and by P7 are developing confidence in debating skills through brisk and engaging activities such as 'verbal boxing'. They write well for a range of purposes including creating poems in French for national poetry day. In mathematics and numeracy, children enjoy learning. The daily focus on developing their mental agility helps them to demonstrate rapid recall of facts. Older children understand strategies such as 'BODMAS' and the rule of 'Fibonacci's sequence' to help them solve problems. They use digital technology well to create spreadsheets with formulae to calculate projected profit from goods they purchase and resell at the Christmas Fair. In discussions about their mental health and wellbeing, children describe articulately and with confidence how they are supported to understand their own feelings. In religious and moral education, children at P5 articulate very well their knowledge of Judaism artefacts. We asked the school to continue, as planned, to ensure all children make very good progress in developing their skills, knowledge and understanding across their learning.

How well does the school support children to develop and learn?

The whole school focus on health and wellbeing supports children very well to develop and learn. In the nursery, there is a nurturing and caring environment and key workers know groups of children as individuals and as learners. They meet regularly to share observations of children's learning. We asked the nursery to continue to develop staff skills in identifying children's learning needs ensuring that experiences are consistently set at the appropriate level of challenge. Tasks, activities and resources at the primary stages provide children with appropriate levels of challenge in their learning. This is very effective in literacy and English and in numeracy and mathematics where overall learning is brisk and engaging. Overall, staff plan effectively with partners and parents to support children needing additional help with their learning. Of note, is the very

positive work of the Educational Psychologist that supports individual children and families as a whole. We discussed with staff ways to improve further the use of resources and setting targets for children needing additional help with their learning.

The school curriculum has a clear focus on raising children's attainment and achievement with a focus on health and wellbeing. It aims to provide the best learning experiences and opportunities for children. In the nursery, staff plan learning taking account of children's interests. Changes to the playroom and outdoor learning space are encouraging children to use their imagination more in their learning. We asked the nursery to continue to develop the curriculum with minimal interruptions to play and ensure that learning takes account of what children already know. Across the primary classes, staff work very closely together to plan learning that takes account of national guidance. Teachers are encouraged to be creative and use meaningful opportunities for children to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding. As a result, partnerships with parents and the local area are used purposefully to enhance programmes and link learning across different subjects. For example, children work closely with local businesses to reduce vandalism in the local area. At P5, children develop their writing and technology skills enthusiastically organising the 'Tartan Tea' for senior citizens. Of note, is the work with partner schools to enrich children's learning and staff understanding of science. The school has clear plans to continue to improve the curriculum further including the effectiveness of assessment across all curricular areas.

How well does the school improve the quality of its work?

The headteacher provides excellent leadership. She is supported by a strong leadership team who take forward their remits very successfully resulting in a very effective pace of change in raising attainment and improving the ethos of the school. The school's approaches to monitor and improve the quality of learning and teaching are outstanding. The headteacher with the leadership team provide clear direction and work extremely well with staff to embed a strong ethos of improvement. Staff willingly take on responsibilities for improving their own professional skills and the work of the school. Many have additional qualifications and strengths that benefit children and family learning. Improvements take very good account of children, parents, staff and partners views. Pupil voice is strong, examples include, the school committees where children accept responsibility and develop their skills in leadership. Children directly involved in the leadership groups speak with pride and knowledge about the difference they make to the school. Improvements to learning and teaching and attainment in literacy and numeracy are strong. In addition, the focus on sport and the 'Chooseday Club' initiative is an example of school staff and parents working very effectively together. This initiative is now led very successfully by parents and attended by the majority of children. There is clear evidence of the school's work impacting very positively on children's experiences and attainment. We have confidence that the school has the capacity to continue to maintain and improve the high-quality learning experiences for children.

This inspection found the following key strengths.

- Articulate, confident, motivated children with high aspirations.
- The outstanding learning experiences of children and the development of their health and wellbeing.
- The effective involvement of parents in the work and life of the school.
- The outstanding approaches to monitor and improve the quality of learning and teaching.
- The very high and improving levels of attainment in literacy and numeracy.
- The excellent leadership of the headteacher and shared leadership of the staff team.

We discussed with staff and East Renfrewshire Council how they might continue to improve the school and nursery class. This is what we agreed with them.

- Continue to take forward the school's vision and areas for improvement as planned.

What happens at the end of the inspection?

We are satisfied with the overall quality of provision. We are confident that the school's self-evaluation processes are leading to improvements. As a result, we will make no further evaluative visits in connection with this inspection. During the inspection, we identified an aspect of innovative practice through the 'Chooseday Club' initiative which we would like to explore further. We shall work with the school and East Renfrewshire Council to record the innovative practice and share it more widely.

Elizabeth C Montgomery
HM Inspector

Additional inspection evidence, such as details of the quality indicator evaluations, for your school can be found on the Education Scotland website at <http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/inspectionandreview/reports/school/primsec/NetherleePrimarySchoolEastRenfrewshire.asp>

If you would like to receive this letter in a different format, for example, in a translation please contact the administration team on the above telephone number.

If you want to give us feedback or make a complaint about our work, please contact us by telephone on 0131 244 4330, or e-mail: complaints@educationscotland.gsi.gov.uk or write to us addressing your letter to the Complaints Manager, Denholm House, Almondvale Business Park, Livingston EH54 6GA.

Quality indicators help schools, education authorities and inspectors to judge what is good and what needs to be improved in the work of the school. You can find these quality indicators in the publication *How good is our school?*¹. Quality indicators for the nursery class can be found in the publication *Child at the Centre*². Following the inspection of each school, the Scottish Government gathers evaluations of three important quality indicators to keep track of how well all Scottish schools are doing.

Here are the evaluations for Netherlee Primary School.

Improvements in performance	excellent
Learners' experiences	excellent
Meeting learning needs	very good

Nursery class

Improvements in performance	good
Children's experiences	good
Meeting learning needs	good

We also evaluated the following aspects of the work of the school and nursery class.

The curriculum	very good
Improvement through self-evaluation	excellent

A copy of the full letter is available on the Education Scotland website at <http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/inspectionandreview/reports/school/primsec/NetherleePrimarySchoolEastRenfrewshire.asp>

¹ *How good is our school? The Journey to Excellence: part 3*, HM Inspectorate of Education, 2007, http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/Images/HowgoodisourschoolJtEpart3_tcm4-684258.pdf

² *The Child at the Centre (2), Self-Evaluation in the early years*, HM Inspectorate of Education, 2007, http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/inspectionandreview/Images/catcseey_tcm4-712692.pdf

Please note that the term "adequate" in these documents has been replaced with "satisfactory".

Netherlee Nursery Class Action Plan following Education Scotland Inspection

Area for Improvement	Continue to take forward the school's vision and areas for improvement as planned				
Impact & Outcomes	Action	Personnel	Timescale	Resources	Monitoring & Evaluation
<p>Staff improve skills in early years pedagogy.</p> <p>Children are challenged, engaged and take more responsibility for their learning appropriate to their age and stages of development.</p> <p>Staff plan high quality learning experiences for all children.</p> <p>Children are able to identify and plan what they would like to learn.</p> <p>A wide range of strategies are in use to support children to take responsibility for their own learning and progress.</p>	<p>Provide CLPL in adult child interactions and enhance skills in Early Years pedagogy.</p> <p>Work with Early Years management across cluster to further develop sharing of effective learning.</p> <p>Research good practice through professional enquiry and visits to other establishments.</p> <p>Plan activities that support the child's age and stage of development.</p> <p>Provide more opportunities for children to be involved in leading and evaluating their learning and making decisions about their next steps.</p>	<p>Partnership with Authority, Cluster and in-house training. DHT HT Cart Mill Family Centre Netherlee Nursery Staff</p> <p>Nursery Staff Children and nursery staff</p>	<p>Session 2016-17</p> <p>Session 2016-17</p> <p>Feb-June 2016</p> <p>March 2016 - ongoing</p>	<p>CLPL Budget Modules provided by University of Strathclyde</p> <p>Building Ambition</p> <p>Professional Reading materials: 'From Birth to 5...Children's Developmental Progress' (Mary Sheridan)</p>	<p>CLPL programme and staff feedback</p> <p>Playroom observations</p> <p>Cluster minutes</p> <p>Learning conversations</p>
<p>Children are more motivated and active in their learning.</p> <p>Assessment is an integral part of the learning and teaching process.</p> <p>High quality observations take place naturally during everyday activities and interactions.</p>	<p>Introduce the use of Leuven Wellbeing and Involvement Scales to enable staff to assess and identify levels of engagement.</p> <p>Work with staff, parents and children to develop a new storybook approach to evidence progression in learning.</p> <p>Review the way learning books are used and ensure observations are live, show progression of learning and identify next steps.</p> <p>Further develop the learning environment to ensure it is enabling all children to access a range of excellent experiences.</p>	<p>DHT HT Cart Mill Family Centre Netherlee Nursery Staff</p> <p>Parents, nursery staff and children</p> <p>Children and nursery staff</p>	<p>Inservice- May 2016</p> <p>Session 2016-17</p> <p>March 2016</p> <p>Implement Session 2016-17</p> <p>March 2016</p> <p>Ongoing 2016-17</p>	<p>CLPL Budget Modules provided by University of Strathclyde</p> <p>Leuven/Wellbeing Scales</p> <p>Nursery Budget</p>	<p>Staff feedback, playroom observations</p> <p>Children, staff and parental feedback</p> <p>Monitoring sample of learning books</p> <p>Playroom observations, feedback from children, staff and parents.</p>

Netherlee Nursery Class Action Plan following Education Scotland Inspection

Area for Improvement	Continue to take forward the school's vision and areas for improvement as planned				
Impact & Outcomes	Action	Personnel	Timescale	Resources	Monitoring & Evaluation
<p>Staff make sound judgements about children's progress and respond quickly to ensure learning opportunities meet the needs of individuals.</p> <p>Almost all children make very good progress through experiences that promote holistic learning.</p> <p>Children develop their social, emotional, physical and cognitive skills.</p> <p>Parents are fully involved in understanding their child's progress.</p>	<p>Develop further and implement a regular monitoring system to ensure high quality experiences are promoted through the engaging, enabling environment.</p> <p>Establish in every day practice a clear understanding of assessment, moderation and quality assurance.</p> <p>Ensure that learning books are accessible, part of the daily routine and reflect a broad and progressive story, individual to each child's learning, including next steps.</p> <p>Provide a range of approaches for children to share learning with parents (stay and play, learning books, coffee and chat, 6 week settling review).</p>	<p>DHT and PT</p> <p>All nursery staff</p> <p>Staff, Parents and Children</p>	<p>March 2016 Ongoing 2016-17</p> <p>Feb 2016 Ongoing 2016-17</p> <p>Feb 2016 Ongoing 2016-17</p> <p>Jan 2016 Ongoing 2016-17</p>	<p>How Good Is Our Early Learning and Childcare</p>	<p>Records of quality assurance activities e.g. professional dialogue, learning conversations, learning visits, tracking information and staff planning, etc.</p> <p>Parental feedback Record of quality assurance activities.</p>