

Aberdeen City Council

**Follow-up report to the HMle Inspection
of Kingsford School and Nursery**

February 2023



On 1st February 2022 HM Inspectors published a letter on Kingsford School and Nursery class. Inspectors had undertaken a return visit to the school in December 2021 and the letter issued set out the progress the school had made and how well that it was supporting children's learning and achievements.

The engagement helped HMIe learn about how children and their families have been supported through the COVID-19 pandemic. They also heard about approaches that have been working well to support children's health and wellbeing, learning and progress. They discussed with the headteacher and local authority officers the school's progress in taking forward the recommendations from the original inspection in April 2019.

Inspectors indicated they would ask for a further report on progress within a year of the inspection.

The School and its Context

The headteacher has been in post now since August 2021. This has provided stability for the senior leadership team and has been supported further by the return of the permanent DHT on a reduced contract. This has provided an opportunity to retain the Acting DHT for a period of time, with a clear focus on improving outcomes within ELC. The full time DHT has been in post supporting the SLT and has provided consistency within the team.

1. Improve the strategic leadership of the school to ensure that key elements of the work of the school fully reflect national guidance.

Following a strong start to improving the strategic leadership of the school, the Head Teacher continues to work closely with staff to identify priorities for professional development and improve the quality of learning and teaching across the school and nursery. A clear Quality Improvement Calendar has been established and is supporting the planning and delivery of targeted work.

The School Improvement Plan is reviewed on an ongoing basis with key stakeholders, including engagement with staff, pupils and parents, and clear action plans are evaluated termly to ensure progress. Pupil and parent friendly versions of these plans have been developed with pupils to support clarity of understanding across the whole school community, with a clear focus on improvement.

As part of the development of the school vision, values and aims, learning dispositions have been identified and agreed by the whole school community and are displayed throughout the school. Classroom learning visits during term 1 of Session 2022/2023 highlighted a need for a renewed focus and this is being addressed through the work of the pupil leadership team and staff development.

Relationships across the staff team continue to be developed with a positive focus on team building and staff morale. Staff wellbeing is an ongoing feature in staff development sessions. Almost all staff across the school continue to acknowledge and welcome their involvement in school developments and further leadership roles

have been established with all staff being provided opportunities to engage with this. This is improving a staff sense of belonging and individuals taking a lead role within aspects of the school improvement journey.

The pupil leadership team meet fortnightly with the Depute Head Teachers, with a focus on broad school improvement activity and termly with the Head Teacher focusing on self-evaluation of the school improvement plan. Learners are involved in learning walks and there is evidence of pupil voice throughout the school. There is still work to do in developing pupil voice.

The school continue to work with the local authority learning, teaching & assessment framework and have agreed a shared understanding of expectations to ensure all children make the best possible progress.

Review the remits of the senior leadership team and take prompt action to update school policies and practices related to supporting children's wellbeing, equality and inclusion.

The senior leadership team (SLT) has clearly defined remits and responsibilities that build on their professional expertise and knowledge. We are now beginning to see the impact of targeted remits, and these are clear and well-articulated for the whole school community.

Senior leaders work in partnership to undertake classroom observations, providing the opportunity to build capacity and develop a clear understanding of the agreed standard at Kingsford which in turn supports more effective feedback to staff and improvement in learning and teaching.

School policies are being reviewed on an ongoing basis with full engagement of key stakeholders. This is positively impacting on the operational and strategic planning and delivery within the school. The use of digital forms has provided a greater increase in engagement. Responses are collated to feed back to policy / guidance development and key themes fed back to parents, staff, and learners.

Engagement with Dyslexia Outreach has offered a consistent model of approach to be introduced with the future aim of ensuring all classes are dyslexia friendly. 7 members of staff are taking this forward. Internal assessments are in place to evidence support needs before further requests for assistance from external partners. Supported by the local authority, the school have introduced a health and wellbeing curriculum resource and implemented a staged system of support with a key focus on improving outcomes for all learners and to enhance staff understanding of supporting learners needs.

Further work is still required to increase rigour around the targeted support for learning approach within the school, however senior leaders recognise this and are working with the staff team to build a plan around it. All staff have undertaken training on ACEs and Trauma Informed Practice alongside health and wellbeing training, and this continues to be built on through ongoing discussions. Emotion Coaching training has been undertaken by all staff, and work with the Dyslexia and Autism Outreach Services has supported staff understanding of strategies and supports to use when planning for individuals. Support staff are invited to participate in all training opportunities.

Pupil review meetings are scheduled on an ongoing basis and an overview of this is maintained by the Head Teacher to ensure appropriate and timely interventions are planned. Prior to all review meetings a pupil centred feedback sheet is completed by the learner to ensure pupil voice is included as a part of the discussion. Where appropriate, pupils are invited to attend part of the review meeting to share their views. Parent feedback around this process has been positive as it is providing a clearer picture of pupil progress and targets being planned and met.

All relevant staff have increased their use of latest pastoral notes and further training to align with updated guidance is planned to ensure greater consistency of recording.

Wellbeing surveys are being undertaken by pupils from P5-P7 as part of the authority approach and an increase in more focused discussion with young people around their own evaluation of the wellbeing indicators is still required. This is an area of development being taken forward by one of the DHTs.

Strong links have been made with the home school liaison officer and a clear procedure is in place to monitor and track attendance within the school, which is aligned to ACC attendance policy. This has been confirmed through quality improvement visits within the school.

Build on good practice to bring about consistently high-quality experiences and a sound understanding of the value of learning through play, particularly at the early primary stages.

Through the local authority quality improvement visits in 2021-22 and 2022-23 strengths identified included positive interactions between staff and learners with a calm ethos demonstrated within most classes. Some learners are beginning to have opportunities to co-construct success criteria, which is showing an increased level of engagement and understanding. There will continue to be a focus on key areas of learning and teaching, including differentiation, quality feedback and consideration of the purpose and relevance of learning activities.

Within the Primary 1 classes and ELC setting we continue to see improved approaches to play. This has progressed faster in the P1 class, but positive steps have now been taken within the ELC. Strong practitioners in the P1 area have established high quality learning opportunities for more creative and pupil-led learning to take place. This was evidenced through positive observations within the quality improvement visit from the local authority in 2021-22 and again in September 2022.

The acting depute headteacher continues to lead the early learning and childcare classes and has been supported in this by an interim SEYP with recognised strong practice and effective leadership qualities. There has been a further recruitment of a permanent SEYP who is working closely with the team to continue driving forward improvement. All changes to staffing have been supported by the local authority quality improvement team and early years locality leads, providing oversight of improvement planning priorities. Processes and guidance material within ELC have been further established with the support of the locality lead to ensure clear, robust systems are in place across the setting.

There have been significant staffing challenges within the ELC, which impacted on the pace of improvement and was reflected by Care Inspectorate in September 2022, however following the above regular and focused supports, a return visit in January 2023 evidenced positive progress and this will continue to be a priority within the school improvement plan over the coming year.

Learning & teaching questionnaires completed by all staff inform the development of the school improvement plan and development calendar for the year alongside quality improvement activity, both internal and external. Learning walks and planned classroom observations have been undertaken by the senior leadership team and are supporting self-evaluation of practice. Some aspects of this will be supported by the pupil leadership members through the Young Leaders of Learning Programme and are planned for term 4 of this session.

ELC improvement journey - [Book Creator - Kingsford Improvement Journey](#)

Continue as planned to refresh the school's curriculum rationale to better reflect the unique context of Kingsford Primary School and Nursery Class. This includes extending the range of partners to support the delivery of the curriculum, with a stronger emphasis on developing children's skills for learning, life and work.

There has been a clear focus on developing a whole school understanding of interdisciplinary learning (IDL) and this has continued over the past 2 years. This work is to be reviewed at the end of this session to ensure a clear 3 year plan is in place. There are whole school contexts being used with spotlight weeks planned throughout the year. Within this work there has been consideration of relevance with a particular focus on the post-pandemic world and building an increased understanding across the whole school, of skills for learning, life, and work.

There has been a significant focus on increasing quality and consistency of approaches with regards to literacy. A whole school approach to phonics and spelling included whole staff training and time built in to the working time agreement for teachers to familiarise themselves with new resources and programmes. From August 2022 there has been a full roll out of these approaches, supporting a consistent way of working across the school and supporting staff to have a clearer understanding of progression whilst also identifying gaps. Staff are building confidence in delivery of approaches to support improvement in literacy and now have consistent planning formats to use across the school. 3 members of the team are also involved in a national writing project to support raising attainment. This has provided opportunities for increased professional dialogue and moderation with class teachers and senior leaders across Aberdeen and beyond and will continue to build on this good work.

Establish an effective system for planning, tracking and monitoring attainment and children's wider achievements. Develop assessment approaches which are focussed on bringing about further improvement in children's attainment in literacy and numeracy

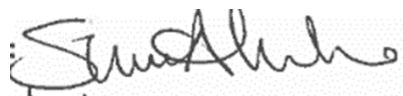
Progress and achievement meetings are conducted every 6-8 weeks between class teachers and SLT as part of the school quality assurance calendar during which

individual support plans, target setting, and progress are discussed. Staff have increased confidence in updating Progress & Achievement within SEEMiS and SNSA data is now included in tracking discussion. SLT continue to work with staff to increase confidence in interpretation of data to ensure it supports improvement. Whole school attainment updates are shared with staff following each progress and achievement meeting and within Primary 1 there is a clear focus on gap/strength analysis to inform professional discussion. In ELC there is ongoing work to improve use of developmental overviews and focus child processes.

SLT have engaged in data analysis discussions, increasing confidence levels when considering collated results. Moderation activities have been undertaken with teaching staff, resulting in increased confidence levels when confirming achievement of a level. An overview tracking system has been established to aid forward planning when allocating resource and further engagement in professional learning to enhance this has been planned and will continue to increase confidence of staff.

Conclusion

The headteacher, senior leadership team and staff have responded positively and proactively to the challenges presented by the Covid-19 recovery period. They have maintained a focus on school improvement, adjusting plans appropriately to reflect circumstances at the time. The head teacher has established strategies to monitor and evaluate the impact of changes on outcomes for learners and the work of the school. We are confident the school has capacity to continue to improve.



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8 February 2023