

REPORT TO: Education Committee

MEETING DATE: 20 September 2016

BY: Depute Chief Executive (Resources and People Services)

SUBJECT: The Honest Toun Nursery Follow up Inspection Visit by Education Scotland, carried out jointly with the Care Inspectorate

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To report to the Committee the outcome of Education Scotland's follow up inspection visit to The Honest Toun Nursery, Musselburgh. The Care Inspectorate report is still pending.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to: -
- (i) Note the contents of the Inspection report from Education Scotland (Appendix 1).
 - (ii) Note that, as a result of the many improvements made, no further follow up visits will be made by Education Scotland to The Honest Toun Nursery in connection with this inspection.

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Honest Toun Nursery in Musselburgh is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 27 children from birth to two years, 20 children aged two to three years and 55 children aged three years and over.
- 3.2 It is a Partnership Centre commissioned by East Lothian Council to provide funded early education and childcare places. At the time of the inspection (May 2016) East Lothian Council were funding 20 pre-school places and two Priority 2s places.
- 3.3 The Nursery received significant support from early years' staff within East Lothian Council following the original Education Scotland inspection carried out in January 2015 and the monitoring visit of July 2015.
- 3.4 The report noted the following improvements at the Nursery:
- Children's learning and achievement has continued to improve.
 - All children are treated with dignity and respect.

- Children enjoy the improved outdoor play experiences.
- Staff plan experiences and activities more confidently now.
- Staff provide more opportunities for literacy, numeracy and well being across learning.
- Staff have engaged well with professional learning opportunities.

3.4 The following areas for improvement were noted:

- Children should be supported in developing their own understanding of what they do well and what they need to do to improve further.
- Further links should be developed with local primary schools to support children's transition from nursery to P1.
- The quality of online journals and approaches to monitoring and evaluation should be improved.

4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 None

5 INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

5.1 The subject of this report does not affect the wellbeing of the community or have a significant impact on equality, the environment or economy.

6 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Financial - none

6.2 Personnel - none

6.3 Other - none

7 BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 Education Scotland follow up report: The Honest Toun Nursery, Musselburgh (Appendix 1).

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DATE	24 August 2016

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Dear Parent/Carer

**The Honest Toun Nursery
Musselburgh**

In January 2015, HM Inspectors published a letter on your child's early learning and childcare setting. We subsequently returned to the setting to look at how it had continued to improve its work and published another letter in July 2015. Recently, as you may know, we visited the setting again. During our visit, we talked to children and worked closely with the manager and staff. We heard from the manager and other staff how the setting has continued to improve. We looked at particular areas that had been identified in 2015. As a result, we were able to find out how well children are now learning and achieving and how the setting is continuing to support them to do their best. This letter sets out what we found. The Care Inspectorate inspected the setting at the same time and their report is available at www.careinspectorate.com.

How well do children learn and achieve?

Children's learning and achievement has continued to improve in your child's setting since our last visit. Across the setting, all children are treated fairly and with respect. Parents appreciate that staff provide a warm welcome to children and their families as they arrive. Almost all babies, toddlers and children aged three to five years are happy and settled in their respective playrooms. They are familiar with their environment and confident in moving around. The youngest children are responding well to the reorganisation of their two rooms into one larger area now called The Buttercup Room. Children across the setting particularly enjoy their outdoor play experiences which have been improved further through thoughtful consideration of children's suggestions and interests. Most children aged three to five years interact well with each other, staff or other adults. More children are now confident, keen to talk with adults and their peers and eager to share information about the setting and their experiences. When stimulated, children are motivated and enthusiastic in their play. They enjoy playing with their friends and cooperate well together, for example, to build a large-scale 'car' in the construction area. Staff are now more confident in allowing children to lead their learning. They take more account of children's interests when they plan further activities and experiences with them. For example, as part of their graduation preparations, the older children planned their own celebration and designed their own costumes. Children continue to have wider choice and greater freedom to choose the experiences they would like to access. The Sunflower Room has been reviewed to be a more appropriate space where effective learning takes place more often. Displays throughout the setting, in particular, are now more about the children and less formal and adult-orientated.

Most children aged three to five years are keen to talk about their learning. For example, to explain how they created *The Hungry Caterpillar* display. Parents are able to access online journals from home and make comments about their child's learning. These journals provide parents with a range of evidence of what their children are doing through photographs and comments. We have discussed with the setting how staff could be supporting children further in developing their own understanding of what they do well and what they need to do to improve further. Children's progress in developing and applying their early literacy and numeracy skills continues to improve. Older children are continuing to develop independence and self-reliance. For example, through serving themselves at snack and lunchtimes.

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

Across the setting, relationships are warm and supportive. Staff use their knowledge of children's interests and their observations of their play and learning to plan experiences and activities more confidently now. There is a more consistent approach across all staff in planning children's learning. We have discussed with the setting how observations now need to be more consistently of a higher standard to ensure that all children are appropriately challenged in all of their learning. Staff now plan more confidently using appropriate national guidance. The setting continues to make use of partners to contribute to children's learning, for example, the music specialist and the local swimming pool as well as resources in the local community to enhance children's learning, such as the local shops, woodland area, beach and library. Staff have worked well together to provide more opportunities for applying literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing across learning such as through the relocated mud kitchen. Planting and growing, for example, sunflowers and tomatoes, allows children to have appropriate science experiences. Staff continue to support transitions into and across the setting very well. We have asked the setting to develop further their links with local primary schools to support children as they move from the setting to P1.

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

Staff are now more actively involved in reflecting on their own practice and the setting's overall provision. They can describe positive impact from their own involvement in taking forward improvement priorities such as the reorganisation of the youngest children's rooms. This has been encouraged by the leadership team comprising of the acting manager and area manager who have worked closely to develop a better sense of teamwork across the setting. The staff have engaged well with professional learning opportunities to improve and update their practice. For example, they talk well about how *Building the Ambition* has influenced and informed their own practice and could describe the positive impact on experiences for children. The Parent Focus Group has been well received across the setting. You spoke to us positively about the willingness of the Forum to listen and act upon parental feedback. For example, parent information noticeboards have been improved to be more informative and accessible following parental input to the Forum. These boards include encouragement to parents to contribute further ideas, feedback and opinions about the setting. The acting manager is already well respected by staff and parents and has formed a sound partnership with her area

manager to improve the setting and its provision. This partnership has recently been strengthened through the appointment of a new deputy manager. This provides a solid foundation upon which to establish a robust and rigorous set of procedures for monitoring the quality of playroom practice and online journals. The setting is now ready to take further improvement forward in a planned and consistent way assisted by East Lothian Council.

What happens next?

The setting has made improvements in key areas since our last visit. Children are continuing to develop a better understanding of what they do well and what they need to do to improve further. Staff are now more confident in planning appropriate experiences for children, more often based on their own interests. Management and staff understand that there is still scope to improve further the quality of the online journals and approaches to monitoring and self-evaluation. As a result of the many improvements made we will make no further visits in connection with this inspection. As part of its arrangements for reporting to parents on the quality of education, East Lothian Council will inform parents about the setting's progress.

Alasdair Eadie
HM Inspector

<http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/inspectionandreview/reports/school/eyc/TheHonestTounNurseryMusselburghEastLothian.asp>.

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