

**REPORT TO:** Education Committee

**MEETING DATE:** 21 November 2017

**BY:** Depute Chief Executive (Resources and People Services)

**SUBJECT:** Education Scotland Inspection of St Mary's RC Primary School and Nursery Class

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## **1 PURPOSE**

- 1.1 To report to Committee on the inspection of St Mary's RC Primary School and Nursery Class by Education Scotland.

## **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to: -
- (i) Note the content of the Education Scotland report (Appendix 1).
  - (ii) Note the content of the Summary of Inspection Findings (SIF) which has been lodged in the members' library.
  - (iii) Congratulate the Head Teacher and staff on a positive inspection and on the good practice identified by Inspectors.
  - (iv) Note that as a result of the inspection findings Education Scotland is confident that the school has the capacity to continue to improve. Inspectors will make no further visits to St Mary's RC PS in connection with this inspection. East Lothian Council will inform parents/carers about the school's progress as part of its arrangements for reporting on the quality of its schools.

## **3 BACKGROUND**

### **New Inspection model**

- 3.1 From September 2016, Education Scotland made changes to the full inspection model for schools following a wide ranging consultation.
- 3.2 The new school inspection model uses the How Good Is Our School 4? (HGIOS?4) quality indicators for primary and secondary inspections and

How Good Is Our Early Learning and Childcare? (HGIOELC?) for inspections of Nursery and Early Years provisions. The 15 quality indicators (QIs) significantly 'raise the bar' in terms of the quality of outcomes expected of schools in each of the key areas.

- 3.3 Inspectors use the following selected quality indicators (QIs) to report on the outcomes of inspection using a six-point scale ranging from excellent to unsatisfactory:

HGIOS? 4:

- 1.3 Leadership of change
- 2.3 Learning, Teaching and Assessment
- 3.2 Raising Attainment and Achievement
- 3.1 Ensuring Wellbeing, Equality and Inclusion

HGIOELC?:

- 1.3 Leadership of change
- 2.3 Learning, Teaching and Assessment
- 3.2 Securing Children's Progress
- 3.1 Ensuring Wellbeing, Equality and Inclusion

- 3.4 A further QI is chosen by the school. This enables school staff and inspectors, together, to focus on a particular area of the school's work related to its current context, with the aim of bringing about improvement through professional dialogue. The QI chosen by the school is not evaluated using the six-point scale.

- 3.5 At the end of the inspection process, the outcomes are published in a short letter to parents and carers outlining the key strengths and areas for improvement. This letter provides a statement of the confidence the inspectors have in the school's capacity to improve the quality of its own work. This is published along with the summary of inspection findings (SIF). The SIF is a professional report and summarises the findings from all the evidence gathered during the week of the inspection. This document is intended to be used by staff in progressing school improvement.

### **National Improvement Framework**

- 3.6 As part of the Education (Scotland) Act 2016, the reporting procedures for the National Improvement Framework (NIF) have been placed on a statutory footing. The evaluations of QIs 1.3, 2.3 and 3.2 feed directly into the evidence base for the NIF in order to demonstrate progress with the NIF priorities and drivers for improvement. This progress is reported on an annual basis by the Scottish Government, with the next report due to be published in December 2017.

- 3.7 **St Mary's RC Primary School and Nursery Class** was inspected in May 2017. A letter to parents and carers summarising the key findings was published in September 2017. All of the quality indicators were evaluated as **good** with features of **very good** practice in both the primary stages

and the nursery class. The results of this inspection compare very favourably with other primary school inspections carried out using the new quality indicators and in this new inspection model.

- 3.8 Following the inspection, the areas for improvement identified in the report are being taken forward in the School Improvement Plan. Progress with the identified areas for improvement will be reported to parents and carers through the school Standards and Quality Report and Parent Council forum.

#### **4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 None

#### **5 EQUALITIES 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 report on St Mary's RC Primary School and Nursery Class Report dated 19 September 2017 (Appendix 1).

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<b>DATE</b>	8 November 2017



19 September 2017

Dear Parent/Carer

In May 2017, a team of inspectors from Education Scotland visited St Mary's RC Primary School and Nursery Class. During our visit, we talked to parents/carers and children and worked closely with the headteacher and staff. We gathered evidence to evaluate the quality of leadership and management, learning provision and children's success and achievements.

The inspection team found the following strengths in the school's work:

- Strong leadership of the headteacher in the development of a highly inclusive and nurturing ethos in keeping with the school's values. Effective teamwork across staff at the primary stage and their involvement in the process of change. This is helping improve a range of outcomes for children.
- Impressive climate of mutual respect resulting in strongly positive relationships. This has contributed to a learning environment in which children feel safe and cared for.
- Children's involvement in identifying their strengths and next steps in learning at the primary stages. The consistency in approach to gathering quality evidence of learning across the school. The effective use of the outdoors as a stimulating learning environment in the early learning and childcare setting.
- The school's successful approach to the teaching of writing which is inspiring many children across the primary stages to produce work of a high quality.

The following areas for improvement were identified and discussed with the headteacher and a representative from East Lothian Council:

- Ensure all staff in the early learning and childcare setting are equally involved in the process of change.
- Continue to develop learning pathways in all curriculum areas to ensure children at the primary stages receive their entitlement to a broad general education. This will support children in making the best possible progress across all areas of their learning.

**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? for the primary stages and for the nursery class, How good is our Early Learning and Childcare?*<sup>1</sup>. 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 Education Scotland's evaluations for St Mary's RC Primary School

### Primary stages

<b>Leadership of Change</b>	<b>good</b>
<b>Learning, teaching and assessment</b>	<b>good</b>
<b>Raising attainment and achievement</b>	<b>good</b>
<b>Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion</b>	<b>good</b>

### Nursery class

<b>Leadership of Change</b>	<b>good</b>
<b>Learning, teaching and assessment</b>	<b>good</b>
<b>Securing children's progress</b>	<b>good</b>
<b>Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion</b>	<b>good</b>

The letter and more detailed summarised inspection findings will be available on the Education Scotland website at <https://education.gov.scot/inspection-reports/east-lothian/5553628>

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<sup>1</sup> *How good is our school? (4<sup>th</sup> Edition) 2015; How good is our Early Learning and Childcare? 2016* – [How Good Is Our School?](#) [How good is our early learning and childcare?](#)

## What happens next?

We are confident that the school has the capacity to continue to improve and so we will make no more visits in connection with this inspection. East Lothian Council will inform parents/carers about the school's progress as part of its arrangements for reporting on the quality of its schools.

Marie McAdam  
HM Inspector

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