

REPORT TO: Education Committee

MEETING DATE: 21 March 2023

BY: Executive Director, Education and Children's Services

SUBJECT: Education Scotland Inspection of East Linton Primary School and Nursery Class

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To report to Committee on the outcomes of the Education Scotland inspection of East Linton Primary School and Nursery Class.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to:-
- (i) Note the content of the Education Scotland letter (Appendix 1).
 - (ii) Note the content of the Summary of Inspection Findings for the Primary School and Nursery Class (SIF) (Appendix 2).
 - (iii) Note the content of the Summary of Inspection Findings for the Nursery Class (SIF) (Appendix 3).
 - (iv) Note that Education Scotland are confident that the school has the capacity to continue to improve and so will make no more visits in connection with this inspection.
 - (v) Congratulate the Head Teacher and staff on a positive inspection and on the key strengths identified by the Inspection Team.

3 BACKGROUND

3.1 Inspection model

The inspection team used the How Good Is Our School 4? (HGIOS4?) quality indicators for primary inspections and How Good Is Our Early Learning and Childcare? (HGIOELC?) for inspections of Nursery and Early Years provisions to evaluate the quality of provision at East Linton Primary School and Nursery Class.

- 3.2 Inspectors use the following selected quality indicators (QIs) to report on the outcomes of their five day full inspection model using a six-point scale ranging from excellent to unsatisfactory:

HGIOS?4:

- 1.3 Leadership of change
- 2.3 Learning, Teaching and Assessment
- 3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion
- 3.2 Raising Attainment and Achievement

HGIOELC?:

- 1.3 Leadership of change
- 2.3 Learning, Teaching and Assessment
- 3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion
- 3.2 Securing Children's Progress

3.3 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 inspection. This document is intended to be used by staff in progressing school improvement.

3.4 National Improvement Framework

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 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 annually by the Scottish Government.

3.5 Inspection Findings

East Linton Primary School and Nursery Class was inspected in November 2022. A letter to parents and carers summarising the key findings was published on 7 February 2023. The quality indicators were evaluated as follows:

Quality Indicator HGIOS?4 and HGIOELC?		East Linton Primary School Primary 1 to Primary 7	East Linton Nursery Class Early Learning and Childcare
2.3	Leadership of change	Good	Good
2.3	Learning, teaching and assessment	Good	Good
3.1	Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion	Good	Good
3.2	Raising attainment and achievement	Good	
3.2	Securing children's progress		Good

3.6 Key Strengths

- Children experience a warm and positive ethos in which to play and learn. This is underpinned by nurturing and mutually respectful relationships. Children are considerate, articulate, confident, and very motivated by learning that actively engages them in thinking creatively.
- Children's experiences are supported and enhanced by the community and partners. The Head Teacher reaches out to the community to engage and support in a very approachable manner. She gives children quality care and pastoral support.
- The Head Teacher and staff have assisted children to sustain good levels of progress and attainment in numeracy and mathematics, listening, talking and reading.

3.7 Areas for improvement

- Staff should now build on the most effective practice to plan more creative and challenging learning that continues to meet the learning needs of the highest attaining children. This should enable all children's increased use of digital technology and a range of learning approaches, such as play.
- Teachers should continue to raise children's attainment in writing.
- The Head Teacher, fully supported by staff, should continue to focus on the strategic improvement of the school. This should include areas such as the further development of the curriculum.

3.8 The school's Quality Improvement Officer, Mrs Karen Haspolat works closely with the Head Teacher and staff to provide professional advice and support and challenge.

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 East Linton Primary School and Nursery Class Report (Appendix 1) and Summary of Findings Primary School and Nursery Class (Appendix 2), Summary of Findings Nursery Class (Appendix 3).

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AUTHOR'S NAME	Karen Haspolat
DESIGNATION	Quality Improvement Officer
CONTACT INFO	Email khaspolat@eastlothian.gov.uk
DATE	14 February 2023

7 February 2023

Dear Parent/Carer

In November 2022, a team of inspectors from Education Scotland visited East Linton Primary School and Nursery Class. During our visit, we talked to parents/carers and children and worked closely with the headteacher and staff.

The inspection team found the following strengths in the nursery and school's work.

- Children experience a warm and positive ethos in which to play and learn. This is underpinned by nurturing and mutually respectful relationships. Children are considerate, articulate, confident, and very motivated by learning that actively engages them in thinking creatively.
- Children's experiences are supported and enhanced by the community and partners. The headteacher reaches out to the community to engage and support in a very approachable manner. She gives children quality care and pastoral support.
- The headteacher and staff have assisted children to sustain good levels of progress and attainment in numeracy and mathematics, listening, talking and reading.

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

- Staff should now build on the most effective practice to plan more creative and challenging learning that continues to meet the learning needs of the highest attaining children. This should enable all children's increased use of digital technology and a range of learning approaches, such as play.
- Teachers should continue to raise children's attainment in writing.
- The headteacher, fully supported by staff, should continue to focus on the strategic improvement of the school. This should include areas such as the further development of the curriculum.

We gathered evidence to enable us to evaluate the school's work using four quality indicators from [How good is our school? \(4th edition\)](#) and [How good is our early learning and childcare?](#) Quality indicators help schools, local authorities and inspectors to judge what is working well and what needs to be improved. Following the inspection of each school, the Scottish Government gathers details of our evaluations to keep track of how well Scottish schools are doing.

Here are Education Scotland's evaluations for East Linton Primary School

Quality indicators for the primary stages	Evaluation
Leadership of change	good
Learning, teaching and assessment	good
Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion	good
Raising attainment and achievement	good
Descriptions of the evaluations are available from: How good is our school? (4th edition), Appendix 3: The six-point scale	

Quality indicators for the nursery class	Evaluation
Leadership of change	good
Learning, teaching and assessment	good
Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion	good
Securing children's progress	good
Descriptions of the evaluations are available from: How good is our early learning and childcare? Appendix 1: The six-point scale	

A more detailed document called Summarised Inspection Findings (SIF) will be available on the Education Scotland website at: [Reports page | Inspection reports | Education Scotland](#).

What happens next?

We are confident that the school has the capacity to continue to improve. 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.

Joan C Esson
HM Inspector

Summarised inspection findings

East Linton Primary School

East Lothian Council

7 February 2023

Key contextual information

East Linton Primary School and Nursery Class has as its main catchment the village of East Linton, and surrounding farming hamlets and properties. A minority of children use taxis from small villages to the school.

The school roll in September 2021 was 162, with 40 children in the nursery. The roll is increasing due to new housing developments. Almost all children reside within Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation deciles eight and nine.

The headteacher is the only non-class committed member of the school's senior leadership team. A principal teacher has some senior leadership responsibilities but is largely deployed to teach.

The school has a part-time support for learning teacher, as well as visiting specialists of French, music, and physical education. A part-time teacher who specialises in literacy also teaches in collaboration with class teachers. There are two classroom assistants, one of whom is funded by Pupil Equity Funding (PEF). The school's allocation for PEF is below the median allocation to all primary schools in the local authority and nationally.

Attendance is in line with national averages. There have been no exclusions in recent years.

Staff maintained learning during the pandemic. Children and staff were well prepared for the move to learning through digital platforms. The school has experienced challenges with staff absences since returning to learning in the school building.

1.3 Leadership of change

good

This indicator focuses on collaborative leadership at all levels to develop a shared vision for change and improvement which is meaningful and relevant to the context of the school within its community. Planning for continuous improvement should be evidence-based and linked to effective self-evaluation. Senior leaders should ensure the need for change is well understood and that the pace of change is appropriate to ensure the desired positive impact for learners. The themes are:

- developing a shared vision, values and aims relevant to the school and its community
- strategic planning for continuous improvement
- implementing improvement and change

- The headteacher provides nurturing leadership, in which a collegiate approach to improvement is encouraged. She is highly respected within the community. All staff's efforts to maintain children's education during the pandemic is valued by parents. Staff and children enjoy many successes as they learn together. Children are now ready for all staff to be more ambitious for what they can achieve. Staff should plan to raise further children's good attainment and accelerate progress. The school's vision should be clear on purpose and direction to enable staff to achieve even better outcomes. The headteacher should ensure a balance between strategic leadership and day to day operational management duties, as the school recovers from the pandemic. This should include strategically leading improvements in the curriculum and how it is delivered to meet the needs of all learners.
- The headteacher has recently led a focus on the school's vision, values and aims to support children's positive interactions with each other and staff. Children are now thinking more about how well they demonstrate the school vision. Learners have appealing mantras they use as

prompts to living the values. As a result, children interact well with each other in almost all cases. Children are considerate of each other.

- The headteacher has an outward look to self-evaluation and improvement by linking to a group of headteachers in similar schools. This group has begun to support and challenge each other about priorities within each other's schools. The headteacher has an accurate picture of the overall quality of education across the school. She meets termly with teachers to discuss all children's progress, attainment, curricula and specific support for children. This gives her an overview of the progress of those requiring support with their learning, as well as those who may be facing poverty and hardships. She should now ensure that all teachers receive more individual feedback to support further improvements, to better meet learners' individual needs and increase further challenge in learning.
- Staff are returning to formal approaches to quality assurance that have been impacted by the pandemic. The headteacher used these approaches to inform the current school improvement plan. Staff are increasing their ownership of the school improvement plan. The current plan has a focus on improving the curriculum, leadership, and wellbeing, equality, and inclusion. Within these priorities, there are projects to assist in achieving accelerated progress in closing the attainment gap for all children. These include raising attainment in writing and numeracy. The headteacher is also increasing the focus on analysing data. She is having a closer look at how support for learning is taken forward in the school.
- The headteacher is using PEF to provide additional support staff. This is effectively increasing the amount of one-to-one support that children receive. Children are assisted to make improved progress in their learning.
- All staff are encouraged to lead improvements. They take forward projects for the school improvement plan, as well as to support longer-term goals within the school. Support staff are effective in helping class teachers with the planning and delivery of learning. They support children well with their learning and development needs. Staff speak positively about the quality and relevance of professional learning opportunities to implement change and improvement. These include leadership qualifications. Staff work with other schools, and within the cluster, to extend their professional learning and knowledge.
- Senior leaders and staff employ a range of approaches to communicate and engage with parents. Senior leaders have rightly identified the need to increase parents' role in school improvement priorities. The Parent Council has increased their role in school improvement. They should be more actively involved in all processes for improvement planning. The principal teacher is beginning to lead projects to increase parents' engagement in the school.
- Children are responsible and successful in contributing to the life of the school. They have begun attending the Parent Council to influence change and improvement through the curriculum. Children participate in a range of leadership opportunities in a planned way. Staff should continue to increase the range of opportunities through which children take a more active role in leading change.

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

good

This indicator focuses on ensuring high-quality learning experiences for all children and young people. It highlights the importance of highly-skilled staff who work with children, young people and others to ensure learning is motivating and meaningful. Effective use of assessment by staff and learners ensures children and young people maximise their successes and achievements. The themes are:

- learning and engagement
- quality of teaching
- effective use of assessment
- planning, tracking and monitoring

- Children experience a warm and positive classroom ethos. This is underpinned by nurturing and mutually respectful relationships. Almost all children are considerate and show empathy for others.
- Children are very confident and independent in their learning. They are very motivated by learning that actively engages them in thinking. They are keen to share their thoughts, feelings and opinions. They know that their views are sought, valued and acted upon. Children cooperate well with each other in pairs and small group activities. In a few classes, children can plan and work using the 'thinking made visible' approach. For example, children in P7 plan and create digital presentations to share their recent experiences at a residential trip.
- Children pay good attention to how they present their work. Teachers should set higher expectations and standards for displaying children's work. These should reflect the quality of work that children can produce. Children should be given more ownership for displaying their learning, including with the use of digital technology.
- Most teachers provide a good variety of motivating and engaging activities, which children enjoy. In almost all classes, children are clear about what they are learning and what is expected of them. Children clearly explain the purpose of their learning and next steps. Children should be challenged further in their learning. They would benefit from more enquiry and play-based approaches, including at P1.
- In almost all classes, teachers' explanations and instructions are clear. Teachers make effective use of quality questioning to check understanding, extend learning and develop higher-order thinking skills. Children benefit from very targeted support to reduce gaps in progress and attainment in literacy. This assists with sustaining and embedding effective strategies to raise attainment within the curriculum. Children's learning should be less teacher-led when appropriate to meeting the aims of lessons. Teachers should provide more differentiation. Children respond well, and with enthusiasm to visiting specialist teachers' input for French, music and physical education. They learn very effectively within the local community and with partners. This includes the local church and library. In most lessons, plenary sessions enable children to reflect on their learning and recap on skills learned.
- A few teachers plan high-quality outdoor learning experiences. Children are enabled to explore their local community and rural context. For example, children use a reading text as a provocation to learn about people's personal qualities in a range of outdoor experiences. Children develop skills in team working, as well as skills in raft building. There is scope, as planned, for all staff to continue developing and embedding outdoor learning across the curriculum. Partners and community members are offering their valuable services to support the school take this forward.

- There are a few examples of technologies being used well by children. For example, children worked with partners to create a high-quality film in real-life, challenging and relevant contexts. In these situations, children access digital presentation software as part of their learning. Currently, teachers could build further on the improvements they made in their use of digital learning during the pandemic. They should monitor that children's free access to technology supports their intended and responsive learning.
- Teachers use a range of summative and formative assessment approaches within learning and teaching to evidence children's progress. Almost all teachers use formative approaches to gather feedback of understanding as part of their lessons. Teachers should have a more consistent approach to providing written feedback to support children with their next steps in learning.
- Children use assessment jotters to gather evidence of their own progress across the curriculum. Teachers moderate these and, in a few classes, children self-assess their work. There is scope to develop more opportunities for children to include peer-assessment and self-assessment across the school. Teachers should continue to develop further assessment approaches to reflect more learning and evidence of learning across contexts of the curriculum.
- Teachers moderate learning across levels. This is part of a planned quality assurance calendar. Teachers are continuing to develop moderation to agree further a shared understanding of progress through the achievement of a level. This in turn will provide even more robust evidence to inform teachers' judgements. Teachers and senior leaders have extended moderation activities to include colleagues in the cluster. This provides opportunities for staff to collaborate and moderate across schools. Recently, teachers used evidence from interdisciplinary contexts across the school as a focus for professional dialogue.
- The moderation cycle has been used to support a range of curricular areas. Staff are using these experiences to develop an East Linton learning, teaching, and assessment approach. This is at an early stage of development and has potential to help staff to shape their ongoing reviewing, planning, and refreshing of the curriculum.
- Teachers consistently plan learning using East Lothian Council's progression pathways to ensure coverage of experiences and outcomes across the curriculum. Teachers develop a 'Map of the Year' with children to plan their curriculum on an annual basis. The interests of individual classes are considered. Teachers should increase their focus on intended learning, and how this connects and builds on prior knowledge across stages. It will be important to continue to incorporate child-led experiences and differentiation. Teachers will be better enabled to track and monitor learners' progress through a level when planning of learning is improved.
- Teachers and the headteacher discuss progress, strategies, interventions and next steps for all children, particularly for those requiring additional support. Classroom assistants are deployed very effectively, providing a balance of effective direct support to individuals and cohorts of children, and wider support for learning for others.

2.2 Curriculum: Learning pathways

- The headteacher collaborated with staff, children and parents to develop a curriculum rationale prior to the global pandemic. This should be revisited to ensure that it reflects the current context of the school and aspirations for all learners at East Linton Primary School and Nursery Class.
- Teachers are implementing local authority progression pathways across all areas of the curriculum. Teachers should continue to use these pathways to meet the needs of individuals and groups of children. Staff, children, and parents should identify the outcomes they seek for all learners within the totality of the curriculum. Children can apply their literacy and numeracy skills across other areas of the curriculum. As part of this, they should make connections between curricular areas and themes important to children and their context. These would include global citizenship and learning for sustainability. This would provide rich learning experiences that offer challenge, depth, and relevance.
- Children explore diversity and multi-faith issues at points throughout the school year. As a result, they demonstrate respect for the beliefs and choices of others.
- Teachers provide children with two hours of physical education weekly. This is supported by high-quality specialist input. It would be beneficial for class teachers to observe the input of the specialist for professional learning purposes.
- Staff have developed a garden and small nature area within the school grounds. A few classes use the school grounds for learning outdoors. Staff should review their policy for learning outdoors to ensure experiences are purposeful, regular, progressive and embedded within the totality of the curriculum.
- The school has a well-stocked library that is timetabled for use by all classes weekly. In addition, children use the local community library and the local authority's library service to provide resources to enhance learning. Teachers make effective use of these facilities to allow children to develop a range of literacy skills and support the development and progression of reading across all classes.
- The headteacher should continue having a strategic overview of the curriculum. This will provide clearer direction for staff to embed the principles of curriculum design.

2.7 Partnerships: Impact on learners – parental engagement

- The headteacher has established a strong sense of community. She is very visible with parents and prioritises time to meet with families, both formally and informally. This assists with creating links with several partners to enrich children’s learning experiences and accelerate progress. For example, the Scotland Reads initiative engages parents in supporting children’s literacy skills at home.
- Families know they can share worries and concerns with the headteacher, and that they will receive support and advice.
- The Parent Council is enjoying a higher profile, with increased impact in giving children a voice in sharing their learning. They engage children in their meetings to share their learning. The Parent Council is ready to be involved in more of the strategic planning of the school.

2.1 Safeguarding

- The school submitted self-evaluation information related to child protection and safeguarding. Inspectors discussed this information with relevant staff and, where appropriate, children. In addition, inspectors examined a sample of safeguarding documentation. Areas for development have been agreed with the school and the education authority.

3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion

good

This indicator focuses on the impact of the school's approach to wellbeing which underpins children and young people's ability to achieve success. It highlights the need for policies and practices to be well grounded in current legislation and a shared understanding of the value of every individual. A clear focus on ensuring wellbeing entitlements and protected characteristics supports all learners to maximise their successes and achievements. The themes are:

- wellbeing
- fulfilment of statutory duties
- inclusion and equality

- The headteacher leads a school that is welcoming and caring. She is very approachable and supports children and their families with their concerns. Children and staff enjoy mutually positive relationships across the school community. Children and staff look out for each other.
- Staff have a strong understanding of the wellbeing indicators. Children use the indicators well to help them reflect on their individual needs, wellbeing and protecting their rights. Most teachers' use of values and mantras, such as "Ready, respect and safety" feature regularly in most classes. Children contribute well to establishing school charters. These are based on children's rights, for which the school has been awarded a bronze award.
- Almost all children feel safe in school, listened to and cared for. They identify a person in school with whom they may speak if they have a concern or worry. Almost all children are very motivated by school. They show this in several ways, including with their good attendance at school. This is in line with national averages. Children's views are sought and listened to through their membership of groups.
- Children can talk about how their learning supports their health and wellbeing. Teachers have supported children with a focus on resilience. This was in response to helping children cope with the pandemic. Children are encouraged to use calming areas within the school and classrooms when they feel the need of a break. This encourages them to manage their own emotions well.
- Classes engage well in physical activities during the school day, for example, the 'daily mile.' This is in addition to two-hours of physical education weekly. Children recognise the benefits to their wellbeing from learning in the outdoors, including with partners. Children in P5 to P7 have their learning recognised with a John Muir Award. The school's secure grounds include a garden area that children maintain. This fosters their interests in sustainability, for which teachers have plans to extend. A next step for the school will be to make increased use of these grounds to support children's outdoor learning and wellbeing. It would now be important to see how these important elements can be built into a progressive health and wellbeing programme, as part of children's learning journey. Almost all children enjoy the school grounds at break times and lunchtimes.
- Children across the school are supported to make healthy and safe choices. Children are learning how to keep themselves safe online.
- Children enjoy leadership opportunities across the school, both in and outwith class. This includes children in P7 being house captains. Children participate in clubs at school and at events within their communities. Children value these activities very highly as opportunities to develop their skills and confidence. They look forward to other events also being available

again, such as the choir. As part of this, staff should review the totality of the health and wellbeing offer to ensure progression and high expectations for children at all stages.

- Staff and young people have had a focus on promoting positive relationships. Almost all children feel that staff treat them with respect. Staff intervene quickly when learners are showing any signs of distress. Almost all children believe that bullying is not an issue at the school. They feel that staff intervene quickly and effectively when a bullying incident takes place.
- The headteacher uses PEF effectively to provide personalised learning support for identified children and families. This is supporting most children well to improve their attainment and progress, and overcome any wellbeing related barriers to learning.
- Staff regularly engage in a range of professional learning that supports their understanding of legislative requirements. Senior leaders and staff ensure that children who need additional support with their learning and development have planned support. They link well with partners to ensure that children receive targeted support.
- Strategies to support children should be made available to all staff in order that children can be supported well across the totality of their learning. Staff should continue to discuss and review the progress that children receiving additional support are making. The headteacher should ensure that all those involved in providing specialist support and interventions discuss and evaluate their inputs. This will help to make sure that children's support is better connected and coherent, with well-targeted interventions recorded and evaluated systematically. This would help accelerate children's progress and raise attainment.
- The school improvement plan has an action on revisiting the roles of support for learning. The headteacher should now prioritise taking this forward to give continued clarity, purpose and direction to this aspect of the school's work.
- Children's diversity is celebrated across the school. Children experience a range of learning activities that recognise and celebrate diversity through assemblies and class activities. This is supported very well by partners. Children learn in responsive and meaningful ways, as well as ensuring that a planned approach is followed. Staff should continue to develop more planned and progressive opportunities for children to learn about aspects of diversity and discrimination.

3.2 Raising attainment and achievement

good

This indicator focuses on the school's success in achieving the best possible outcomes for all learners. Success is measured in attainment across all areas of the curriculum and through the school's ability to demonstrate learners' achievements in relation to skills and attributes. Continuous improvement or sustained high standards over time is a key feature of this indicator. The themes are:

- attainment in literacy and numeracy
- attainment over time
- overall quality of learners' achievement
- equity for all learners

Attainment in literacy and numeracy

- Overall, attainment in literacy and numeracy is good, with most children making progress in line with national expectations. Across the school, there is scope to provide further challenge and increased opportunities for application of children's skills and learning in different contexts.

Attainment in literacy and English

- Overall, most children are making good progress in reading and in listening and talking. The majority of children are making good progress in writing. This is an area for improvement that has been identified in the current school improvement plan.

Listening and talking

- Almost all children are making good progress in listening and talking. At early level, most children can listen and respond to others appropriately, and follow instructions. A few require support to listen during group activities and to take turns to speak. The majority of children at first level listen respectfully and respond to the ideas of others. A few would benefit from developing an understanding of non-verbal cues to engage with their peers in discussion. At second level, most children can communicate several relevant ideas, information and opinions when engaging with others. This includes building on the ideas of peers by asking relevant questions, clarifying points, or supporting others' opinions.

Reading

- Overall, most children are making good progress in reading. At early level, almost all children can use their knowledge of sounds, letters and patterns to read words. Most children enjoy reading or listening to different texts. They can share likes and dislikes. At first level, most children can read aloud fluently, with expression. They can explain why they select certain books. They know how to use the blurb and their knowledge of authors to select texts for enjoyment. At second level, most children identify techniques used to influence the reader. A few children would benefit from further opportunities to answer evaluative and inferential questions about texts.

Writing

- In writing, the majority of children make good progress across the school. At early level, a few children write at least one sentence independently and attempt to use their knowledge of sounds to spell familiar words correctly. Most can communicate ideas, messages and information verbally or in pictures. At first level, the majority of children can write independently in a clear and legible way. They would benefit from more experience in writing across other genres within their curricular contexts. At second level, most children can write for a range of purposes and audiences. Learners apply their knowledge of spelling patterns, punctuation and grammar. They review writing to ensure it makes sense. Children at first and second levels would benefit from further opportunities for functional writing.

Numeracy and mathematics

- Overall, children's attainment in numeracy and mathematics is good. Across the school, there is scope to provide further challenge and application of children's skills and learning in different contexts.

Number, money and measure

- At early level, almost all children can order numbers forwards and backwards within 30. They can match amounts to numbers and pictures with increasing confidence. Almost all children add within 20. They are less confident with subtraction. Children can name the months of the year and the days of the week in sequence. At first level, children can round two- and three-digit numbers to the nearest 10 and 100 with increasing confidence. They can add and subtract with three digits using a range of strategies through word problems. Almost all children can identify fractions and order simple fractions in order of size. Children are confident in identifying notes and coins up to £20 to make a total. They identify the amount of change required, within a real-life context. At second level, almost all children can read, order and sequence numbers up to 100,000. They can partition whole numbers and decimal fractions to three decimal places. They are less confident in multiplying decimal fractions by ten and 100.

Shape, position and movement

- At early level, children recognise and name simple two-dimensional shapes. At first level, children can use mathematical language to describe the properties of a range of two-dimensional shapes and three-dimensional objects including side, face, and edge. Almost all can identify at least two lines of symmetry within a shape. At second level, most children can identify acute and obtuse angles, and calculate the perimeter of a shape. Almost all children are not yet accurate using specific vocabulary including the diameter, radius, and circumference.

Information handling

- At early level, almost all children collect and organise information to create a simple bar chart. They answer simple questions, using the vocabulary of most and least. At first level, children can interpret information displayed on a table. They answer questions well relating to information. At second level, almost all children explain when they would use a bar chart, pie chart and a Venn diagram.

Attainment over time

- Data provided by the school demonstrates that they have maintained good standards of attainment for most children over the last three years. The headteacher has identified a drop in attainment outcomes for children in writing. This is identified as an area for improvement for this session. Teachers' improved systems for planning, tracking and monitoring will support even more robust and reliable data to support professional judgements.
- Staff should make further use of assessment data to inform their decisions about how best to support and challenge children's learning. A more strategic approach to analysing a range of data, including standardised national assessments, will support staff to target individual children's needs, as well as adjustments to teaching programmes.

Overall quality of learners' achievements

- Achievements within school are shared and celebrated at weekly school assemblies, including 'Learning Heroes,' 'Walking with Pride,' and certificates to acknowledge 'Over and Above.' Children speak positively about these achievements. The school also uses social media and their school blog to share children's experiences and achievements with home.
- Across the school, children give their views to help shape the life and work of the school community. They develop a good understanding of leadership roles by participating in a range

of committee groups. House captains and vice captains take a lead role in the school. Children have a positive influence on learning and wider achievements within the local community. They benefit from strong connections with the church and East Linton Action Climate group. This is having a positive influence on children's learning and wider achievements within the local community.

- Children develop resilience, teamwork, and communication skills through their participation in the John Muir Award. Children in P7 attend an outdoor residential trip.
- Learners' participation in sports and physical activity is tracked by the Active School's Coordinator. There is scope for the school to celebrate achievements from home, and track children's participation in after school clubs.

Equity for all learners

- The headteacher tracks the progress of groups of children, including those who require additional support, those who are care experienced or face poverty-related barriers to their learning and wellbeing. As a result, appropriate interventions are in place. The school demonstrates good progress towards reducing identified gaps for the poverty-related attainment gap. Children make very good use of a reading initiative that encourages them to read quality, challenging books. Children's successes in continuous reading are celebrated.
- The headteacher monitors the cost of the school day. She is sensitive to the increasing financial pressure on children and their families. Staff are supporting families' wellbeing with discretion and sensitivity. They also actively engage the Parent Council to work together to find solutions for equity for all.

Explanation of terms of quantity

The following standard Education Scotland terms of quantity are used in this report:

All	100%
Almost all	91%-99%
Most	75%-90%
Majority	50%-74%
Minority/less than half	15%-49%
A few	less than 15%

Other quantitative terms used in this report are to be understood as in common English usage.

Summarised inspection findings

East Linton Primary School Nursery Class

East Lothian Council

7 February 2023

Key contextual information

The nursery class caters for 20 children, aged three to those not yet attending school, at any one time. Children attend for two full days every week and every second Friday. Group A attend on a Monday, Tuesday and alternate Fridays, and Group B attend on a Wednesday, Thursday and alternate Fridays. Children can attend from 08.15 to 17.45. Around half of the children leave at 15.10 when the primary school day ends. The nursery team has recently been extended through a visiting excellence and equity officer and a visiting support teacher. Both have recently taken up post. During periods of remote learning, staff moved quickly to an online platform and the headteacher reports that there was very little negative impact on learning and teaching. Since returning from COVID-19, the school has had high levels of absence among both staff and children. A minority of staff are recently appointed, and teamwork is still developing.

1.3 Leadership of change

good

This indicator focuses on working together at all levels to develop a shared vision for change and improvement which reflects the context of the setting within its community. Planning for continuous improvement change should be evidence-based and clearly linked to strong self-evaluation. Senior leaders should ensure that the pace of change is well judged and appropriate to have a positive impact on outcomes for children. The themes are:

- developing a shared vision, values and aims relevant to the setting and its community
- strategic planning for continuous improvement
- implementing improvement and change

- The nursery class and the school have the same vision and values. The vision focuses appropriately on creating safe, happy learning spaces, with a strong focus on nurture and positive relationships. The nine values include respect, collaboration, resourcefulness and reflection. Staff should consider values that are simpler for very young children to understand. This will ensure that they are meaningful and relevant to the nursery context. Staff exemplify the school values very well through their daily interactions with children and families. They are very nurturing in their approaches. Children are thriving in a respectful and enabling environment.
- The recently appointed visiting support teacher and excellence and equity officer, along with the part-time nursery manager, provide a high level of support to the practitioner team. They are approachable and have joined a strong, cohesive team of staff who are highly committed to improving their practice. Visiting officers are building staff capacity by enhancing staff skills in self-evaluation, and tracking and monitoring children's progress.
- The staff team has developed self-evaluation floorbooks. These document aspects of developing nursery practice. Staff evaluate what is working well, which aspects need to change or develop, how this will be taken forward, and how the impact of change will be measured. Staff use this process effectively to improve arrangements for snack time and the development of the creative area. They are using East Lothian Council's guidelines on rich learning environments to audit the playroom and outdoor provision. Staff could align their ongoing improvement activities more closely to the nursery's identified priorities.
- Staff take responsibility for areas within the nursery. There is scope to extend the opportunities for distributed leadership by taking forward aspects of nursery improvement. These leadership roles would support staff to improve further the quality of children's experiences.

- There is a detailed and well-used quality assurance calendar of monitoring activities. Practitioners are benefitting from the strategic guidance from recently appointed leaders. This is helping them prioritise, measure and analyse the impact of their work. The team should consider visiting other centres to observe and share practice. This outward focus will help them build on their strengths and develop their practice.
- Practitioners are self-motivated and willingly use their strengths, skills and experience to take forward improvements. A few staff are undertaking additional qualifications to improve their knowledge and understanding of early years leadership and practice. The team is at an early stage in using current research on early learning and childcare. As planned, staff should ensure an in-depth focus on the national practice guidance, 'Realising the Ambition: Being Me' (2020).

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

good

This indicator focuses on ensuring high quality learning experience for young children. It highlights the importance of a very good understanding of child development and early learning pedagogy. Effective use is made of observation to inform future learning and identify the progress made. Children are involved in planning for their own learning. Together these ensure children's successes and achievements are maximised. The themes are:

- learning and engagement
- quality of interactions
- effective use of assessment
- planning, tracking and monitoring

- Children are happy, confident and experience a very positive ethos in the nursery. They have freedom to explore, make choices and follow their own interests. This is both indoors and outside. Staff display warm and nurturing relationships with the children, which helps build children's confidence and self-esteem.
- Practitioners' and children's interactions are very responsive and supportive. Practitioners use supportive dialogue as they play alongside the children. Questioning is used very effectively to extend children's thinking. Most children are now ready for experiences which provide greater challenge. Staff should extend children's play. Practitioners should reflect on the current balance of adult- and child-initiated learning experiences, using the national practice guidance.
- There are clear, definitive spaces throughout the nursery. Children's sustained engagement is improved when the staff team set up the nursery with a wider variety of resources. This promotes creativity, curiosity and enquiry. Children enjoy playing outdoors with a variety of loose parts and gardening activities. They benefit from opportunities for physical activity. There is scope to resource the outdoors more richly to develop further children's investigative skills.
- Practitioners use a range of floorbooks, learning stories and personal plans to capture and record children's learning and achievements. Staff share observations with each other. These inform children's individual learning stories. Parents contribute to the learning stories while visiting the nursery. Children display enthusiasm when reflecting upon their accessible learning folders. Children's interests and voice are documented in floorbooks and learning stories. Staff are working to ensure that the interactions, experiences and spaces also reflect children's voice and achievements.
- At times, practitioners make use of digital activities to support learning. Children enjoy playing games on the interactive whiteboard. Staff could expand their use of digital technologies to support and enrich further learning experiences.

2.2 Curriculum: Learning and developmental pathways

- Children benefit from an environment with a wide range of play contexts. They show a strong sense of ownership of the spaces, and freely access activities. Most curriculum areas are represented through play; however resources are too limited in some spaces. As a result, only a majority of children show sustained engagement in their play. Staff plan a range of worthwhile, progressive activities in literacy and numeracy. These could be extended further through play experiences. Staff should also review how to develop the curriculum to offer greater challenge for higher-achieving children.
- Practitioners are highly committed to ongoing training and development. The team is new. They are at an early stage in developing their curriculum rationale. Practitioners use progression frameworks to track learning through the early level experiences and outcomes. This is supporting their understanding of how this links with the environment, and children's play and learning.
- Transitions from home to nursery are well managed. There are enhanced arrangements for those children who require them. Parents reported that they, and their children, were very well supported at points of transition. Staff work very effectively with parents and agencies to ensure that children settle quickly and make secure progress.

2.7 Partnerships: Impact on children and families – parental engagement

- Partnerships with families are a strength of the nursery. Parents report that they are welcomed warmly and kept well informed of their children's progress. Practitioners photograph children's achievements and share these with parents in learning stories. An informative noticeboard keeps parents up to date with current nursery learning to enable them to extend and support this at home. Newsletters, online videos and social media allow parents to share the work of the nursery. Staff could consider using a digital platform to share children's achievements with families. Parents enjoy playing with their children at 'Stay and Play' sessions.
- During periods of remote learning, staff made strenuous efforts to keep connected with families. This includes regular email and phone contact. They encouraged parents to join with their children in online learning challenges. For example, families enjoyed finding long and short things at home, or taking part in indoor scavenger hunts. Staff also sent personalised video messages to children and families.
- There is scope for staff to reinstate the community learning opportunities that were in place before COVID-19, including visits into the community, library visits and visits to the elderly. This would extend the opportunities for meaningful and relevant partnership working.

2.1 Safeguarding

- The school submitted self-evaluation information related to child protection and safeguarding. Inspectors discussed this information with relevant staff and, where appropriate, children. In addition, inspectors examined a sample of safeguarding documentation. Areas for development have been agreed with the school and the education authority.

3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion

good

This indicator reflects on the setting's approach to children's wellbeing which underpins their ability to achieve success. It highlights the need for policies and practices to be well grounded in current legislation and a shared understanding of the value of each individual. A clear focus on wellbeing entitlements and protected characteristics supports all children to be the best they can be and celebrates their successes and achievements. The themes are:

- wellbeing
- fulfilment of statutory duties
- inclusion and equality

- Relationships are calm, positive and supportive. Staff deliver high standards of care. Practitioners' interactions with children and families are consistently respectful and nurturing. Staff report that they are proud of the strong and productive links they have established with their families. Parents and carers are very appreciative of the warmth and friendliness of staff, and the ways in which their children are supported.
- Staff know the children very well. Prior to children starting nursery, practitioners work effectively with families to build relationships and to gather important information. This enables them to fully support children's personal, social and emotional wellbeing, as well as address any identified health needs.
- Staff are positive role models for children. Many show skill in restorative conversations by helping children with strategies to regulate their emotions. Practitioners have focused on the key features of friendship through stories. This is helping children to share, cooperate and show tolerance for other children.
- The nursery displays features of 'Learning Heroes' that have been developed by older children at the primary stages. This includes characters displaying aspiration, resourcefulness and collaboration. The ideas within these resources are worthwhile. However, the displays are not age appropriate, nor can children easily identify with them. Staff plan to develop their own wellbeing characters, which will be more relevant for nursery children. They should also consider making the wellbeing indicators part of their display for parents in the foyer. This will help parents understand how these are taken forward through play activities.
- Children's physical and emotional wellbeing is well supported by regular outdoor play. Staff have skilfully planned a range of activities to encourage both fine and gross motor control. Children are encouraged to risk assess aspects of their outdoor learning.
- Practitioners are fully aware of, and comply, with statutory requirements in relation to early learning and childcare. All staff have received child protection training and are clear about how to keep children safe. Staff also understand potential barriers to learning for individuals and put plans in place to address these. Every child has a personal plan that outlines both care and health needs. These support staff to make targeted interventions to support individual needs. The visiting staff support the team well to take forward specific interventions, particularly for children with more complex needs. Staff are becoming more confident in using visual prompts and timetables. As a result, children feel secure and comfortable with the daily routines. Staff work very effectively with a range of professionals to ensure that each child is well supported to make the best possible progress.

3.2 Securing children's progress

good

This indicator relates to the development and learning of babies, toddlers and young children. It requires clear understanding of early learning and development and pedagogy. It reflects the integrated way young children learn and the importance of experiences and development happening on an individual basis within a supportive, nurturing and stimulating environment. High quality early learning and childcare contributes significantly to enhancing children's progress and achievement as they grow and learn. It can benefit all children by closing the attainment gap and ensuring equity for all. It is about the holistic nature of development and learning ensuring these foundations are secure in order to achieve future attainment success. The themes are:

- progress in communication, early language, mathematics, and health and wellbeing
- children's progress over time
- overall quality of children's achievement
- ensuring equity for all children

- Most children communicate well using a wide range of vocabulary. Children engage enthusiastically in play and listen to their friends and staff. Children with English as an additional language (EAL) are progressing well and growing in confidence. Children are keen to listen to stories, make marks, and enjoy listening to, and reciting songs and nursery rhymes. Most children can recognise or write their own name. Staff have recently evaluated the indoors spaces. They could offer more literacy-rich experiences across both indoor and outdoor spaces. This should include opportunities for creating stories, a wider range of small world play and a variety of high-quality fiction and non-fiction books.
- Most children display a strong interest in numeracy and are progressing well. They enjoy approaching staff to help make sense of numbers and seek problem solving experiences. Most children can count to ten and beyond. Outdoors, children comment on the features of squares and triangles. They show an early understanding of the difference between three-dimensional objects and two-dimensional shapes. They demonstrate creativity as they paint junk models, bake, and make playdough. Children would benefit from more numeracy-rich opportunities indoors and outdoors to promote investigation, problem solving and exploration.
- There is a supportive and inclusive ethos throughout the nursery with caring practitioners, whom the children respect and trust. Children understand how to support their own wellbeing through daily routines, such as snack and lunchtime. The recently introduced key worker system ensures all children have a key adult responsible for their learning and wellbeing. Practitioners support children's health and wellbeing through nurturing relationships. They track early level experiences and outcomes. Staff should build on this to provide increased challenge and personalisation across all areas of learning.
- Most children are making good progress in literacy, numeracy, health, and wellbeing. There is a tracking system in place to support children's individual progress across the early level of Curriculum for Excellence. This helps practitioners in supporting children from different socio-economic backgrounds.
- Practitioners maintain individual tracking for areas of the curriculum. This needs further development to give a clear overview of learning progress over time for each cohort of children. The plan to develop monitoring and tracking meetings will ensure that children have next steps identified to support and challenge their learning.

Explanation of terms of quantity

The following standard Education Scotland terms of quantity are used in this report:

All	100%
Almost all	91%-99%
Most	75%-90%
Majority	50%-74%
Minority/less than half	15%-49%
A few	less than 15%

Other quantitative terms used in this report are to be understood as in common English usage.