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<b>Report To:</b>	<b>Education &amp; Communities Committee</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>9 May 2023</b>
<b>Report By:</b>	<b>Corporate Director Education, Communities &amp; Organisational Development</b>	<b>Report No:</b>	<b>EDUCOM/20/23/MR</b>
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<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Education Scotland Report on Newark Primary School</b>		

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## 1.0 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

1.1  For Decision  For Information/Noting

1.2 The purpose of this report is to inform the Education & Communities Committee of the Education Scotland full inspection of Newark Primary School.

## 2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 Newark Primary School was inspected from 7 – 10 of February 2023, under the Education Scotland's full inspection model. The inspection focused on progress being made within the school leading improvement for change, the quality of learning and teaching, how the school ensures wellbeing, equalities and inclusion and how well they raise attainment, securing progress in closing the poverty-related attainment gap.

2.2 The report published in on 28 March 2023 outlines four key strengths of the work of the school which include:

- The strong pastoral leadership which creates a nurturing and highly inclusive learning environment for all. Senior leaders and staff understand clearly the needs of the school community and work effectively with partners and parents to improve outcomes for children.
- All staff are keen to develop their skills and knowledge and work successfully as a team to improve their practice. They have worked well together to develop children's understanding of their rights.
- The range of approaches used by staff to help children who need additional support in their learning. These approaches encourage children with additional support needs to engage readily with classroom activities and to be independent learners.
- Children's rich opportunities to experience wider achievements. These are helping children to develop effectively their skills for leadership, learning, life and work.

2.3 Education Scotland highlighted three areas for improvement which include:

- Senior leaders should work with the whole school community to identify key areas of improvement and carefully monitor the impact of approaches to raising attainment and achievement.

- Senior leaders and teachers should continue to develop a shared understanding of high-quality learning and teaching and ensure all children receive learning that is well matched to their needs.
- Senior leaders and teachers should continue to work together to raise children's attainment in literacy and numeracy.

### **3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Education & Communities Committee notes the Education Scotland report on Newark Primary School.

**Ruth Binks**  
**Corporate Director**  
**Education, Communities & Organisational Development**

## **4.0 BACKGROUND**

- 4.1 As part of Education Scotland's inspection programme for 2022/23, Newark Primary was inspected in February 2023. Education Scotland staff, a Health and Nutrition Inspector (HNI), associate assessors from education authorities, evaluated the education provision provided within the school.
- 4.2 The inspection covered key aspects of the work of the school at all stages, identified key strengths and areas for improvement.

The framework for this inspection included reviewing quality indicators which enabled Education Scotland to evaluate aspects of:

- 1.3 Leadership of change
- 2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment
- 3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion
- 3.2 Raising attainment and achievement

- 4.3 Education Scotland assessed and reported on the views of parents, pupils, partners and staff, as well as the quality of leadership, learning and teaching, how well the school ensures wellbeing, equality and inclusion and how well the school was raising attainment and achievement for all pupils.
- 4.4 The inspection team also reviewed the 2.2 quality indicators (QIs) linked to curriculum / learning pathways and 2.7 Partnerships: Impact on learners – parental engagement. These QIs are not graded as above.
- 4.5 The report was published on 28 March 2023. It has been issued to staff, parents, local elected members and the Convener and Vice-Convener (Education).

## **5.0 CURRENT POSITION**

- 5.1 Newark Primary School has received a very positive report overall from Education Scotland which outlines the progress made in four key areas. There are three areas for improvement across the school as noted in 2.3. As well as this an area of best practice has been identified and this will be written up by Education Scotland as a "sketch note" and shared nationally.
- 5.2 Inspectors found that the school is warm, inclusive and nurturing with a very positive family ethos. The school values, refreshed these in 2020, are meaningful to all and are fully embedded in the daily life and work of the school.
- 5.3 The report confirms that the headteacher and depute headteachers are held in high regard across the school and local community. They are caring, proactive and committed to improving outcomes for children. Inspectors found that senior leaders work very well together as a team to provide strong pastoral leadership for the children, parents and staff.
- 5.4 Inspectors found that teachers create welcoming, nurturing classroom environments demonstrating their commitment to providing children with a rights-based education. Teachers at the early level support children's learning successfully using embedded play-based approaches.
- 5.5 The report outlines that children are encouraged to play an active role in the wider life of the school. They apply for jobs advertised on the vacancy notice board and can join a range of committees.
- 5.6 Inspectors found that staff had reviewed their curriculum rationale which is underpinned by UNCRC and that teachers make good use of local authority progression pathways to support children's skills development in literacy and numeracy supporting them to plan effectively for

progression and skills development, building on what children already know.

- 5.7 Children were found to be involved in initiatives and events such as whole school health promotion, anti-bullying, world of work week, global citizenship and learning for sustainability. Digital leaders and digital literacy champions have a focus on increasing opportunities to allow children to explore a wider range of digital technology.
- 5.8 The report confirms that the school plays a significant role in the life of the community. Partnerships with parents are based on mutual trust and respect which is resulting in increasing parental engagement. Parents feel that staff are approachable and always willing to listen to their concerns.
- 5.9 In inspection team found that the wellbeing of children and their families underpins all aspects of learning and development across the school community. As a result, children feel safe, valued and respected.
- 5.10 The report outlines that staff undertake professional learning in specialist approaches to ensure they can provide the right kind of help for children with more complex needs. Senior leaders, teachers, pupil support assistants, clerical and janitorial staff understand the impact of trauma and coping with adversity. They use trauma sensitive approaches including supportive language and sensory spaces across the school to help children to self regulate.
- 5.11 The inspection found that children's achievements within and outwith school are celebrated very effectively in a variety of ways, such as attractive displays, regular assemblies and the school's active social media account. The headteacher and all staff have a robust understanding of the social, economic and cultural background of all children. They work very effectively with a wide range of partners to identify and respond to children and families' needs.
- 5.12 Inspectors found that senior leaders track closely the attainment and achievements of children facing particular challenges. These include children who are care experienced, young carers, and those impacted by poverty.
- 5.13 In assessing the quality indicators, Education Scotland found them to be the following:
- |     |  |           |
|-----|--|-----------|
| 1.3 | Leadership of change                       | Good      |
| 2.3 | Raising attainment and achievement         | Good      |
| 3.1 | Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion | Very Good |
| 3.2 | Raising attainment and achievement         | Good      |

An area of best practice relating to the school's work around anti-racist education has also been identified during the inspection. This will be captured as a "sketch note" and shared nationally. Examples of these can be found here: [Sketchnotes - Sharing highly effective practice and inspection highlights | Self-evaluation | National Improvement Hub \(education.gov.scot\)](#)

The inspection found that staff ensure that children understand and challenge discrimination. They have successfully developed a racial literacy model which is ensuring that children of different ethnic groups are treated fairly. Children explore and discuss a range of topics which celebrate diversity through the health and wellbeing programme. Children across the school understand and can talk about cultures and ideas which are different to their own. The General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS) recognised the school's work on anti-racism through the Saroj Lal Award for Pioneering Spirits in Equality and Diversity.

- 5.14 The report outlines that Education Scotland 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.
- 5.15 They have asked that the Education Service and school will inform parents/carers about the school's progress as part of its arrangements for reporting on the quality of its schools.
- 5.16 The Head teacher and Depute Head Teacher(s) continue to meet with their Education Officer on

a regular basis to ensure that the actions from the report and incorporated into their school improvement plan and thus track progress. This will be reported on in full in the annual standards and quality report to parents.

## 6.0 IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The table below shows whether risks and implications apply if the recommendation(s) is(are) agreed:

SUBJECT	YES	NO	N/A
Financial			✓
Legal/Risk			✓
Human Resources			✓
Strategic (LOIP/Corporate Plan)			✓
Equalities & Fairer Scotland Duty			✓
Children & Young People's Rights & Wellbeing			✓
Environmental & Sustainability			✓
Data Protection			✓

## 6.2 Finance

One off Costs

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	Budget Years	Proposed Spend this Report	Virement From	Other Comments
N/A					

Annually Recurring Costs/ (Savings)

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	With Effect from	Annual Net Impact	Virement From (if Applicable)	Other Comments
N/A					

## 6.3 Legal/Risk

N/A.

## 6.4 Human Resources

N/A.

## 6.5 Strategic

N/A.

## 7.0 CONSULTATION

7.1 N/A.

## 8.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

8.1 N/A.