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| <b>Report To:</b>       | <b>Education &amp; Communities Committee</b>   | <b>Date:</b>       | <b>3 September 2024</b> |
| <b>Report By:</b>       | <b>Ruth Binks<br/>Corporate Director<br/>Education, Communities &amp;<br/>Organisational Development</b>       | <b>Report No:</b>  | <b>EDUCOM/31/24/MR</b>  |
| <b>Contact Officer:</b> | <b>Michael Roach<br/>Head of Education</b>   | <b>Contact No:</b> | <b>01475 712891</b>     |
| <b>Subject:</b>         | <b>Education Scotland and Care Inspectorate Inspection Report – St John’s Primary School and Nursery Class</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 outcome of the joint Education Scotland and Care Inspectorate full inspection of St John’s Primary School and Nursery Class.

1.3 St John’s Primary School and Nursery Class were inspected in March 2024, using Education Scotland’s full inspection model. The inspection focused on progress being made within the school and nursery class relating to the leadership of change, the quality of learning and teaching, ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion and how well they raise attainment, securing progress in closing the poverty-related attainment gap. As well as this the Care Inspectorate looked a number of their quality indicators.

1.4 The report published on the 11th of June 2024 outlines four key strengths of the work of the school which includes:

- The strong leadership of the headteacher who has led the creation of a caring, respectful learning environment in the school and nursery class. All children are known and nurtured as individuals and staff are valued and empowered to lead change.
- The highly effective teamwork of staff in the school and nursery. Together they work very well to model positive relationships and encourage children to do and be their best. As a result, children are highly motivated to learn and achieve.
- The leadership of the depute of nursery and the work of the skilled practitioners. This is ensuring children in the nursery experience high-quality early learning and childcare and make very good progress with their learning.
- The robust approaches to assessing and recording children’s progress. This has supported children to make very good progress in literacy and numeracy over time.

1.5 Education Scotland highlighted two areas for improvement which include:

- Continue to develop approaches to high-quality teaching in the school, ensuring children receive appropriate challenge and take a stronger role in leading their own learning.
- Continue to develop effective systems to plan, monitor and review the impact of additional support for children across the school.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

2.1 It is recommended that the Education & Communities Committee notes the Education Scotland report on St John's Primary School and Nursery Class.

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

### 3.0 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

- 3.1 As part of Education Scotland’s inspection programme for 2023/24, St John’s Primary School and Nursery Class were inspected in March 2024. Education Scotland staff and associate assessors from other education authorities, alongside a colleague from the Care Inspectorate, evaluated the education provision provided within the school.
- 3.2 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:

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

- 3.3 The inspection team also reviewed QI 2.1 Safeguarding and Child protection, 2.2 Curriculum: Learning pathways and 2.7 Partnerships: Impact on learners – parental engagement. These QIs are not graded as those above.
- 3.4 As well as these the Care Inspectorate evaluated 5 quality indicators as outlined in 4.4 below.
- 3.5 The report was published on 11 June 2024. It has been issued to staff, parents, local elected members and the Convener and Vice-Convener (Education).

### 4.0 HIGHLIGHTS AND KEY MESSAGES

- 4.1 St John’s Primary School and Nursery Class has received a very positive report overall from Education Scotland which outlines the progress made in the key areas outlined above. There are two areas for improvement across the school and nursery as noted in 1.5 which endorse work already under way and support the school to continue to progress these.
- 4.2 In assessing the quality indicators, Education Scotland found them to be the following for the school:

| QI number | Name of indicator                          | Grading   |
|-----------|--|-----------|
| 1.3       | Leadership of change                       | Very Good |
| 2.3       | Learning, teaching and assessment          | Very Good |
| 3.1       | Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion | Very Good |
| 3.2       | Raising attainment and achievement         | Very Good |

- 4.3 And the following for the Nursery Class:

| QI number | Name of indicator                          | Grading   |
|-----------|--|-----------|
| 1.3       | Leadership of change                       | Very Good |
| 2.3       | Learning, teaching and assessment          | Very Good |
| 3.1       | Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion | Very Good |
| 3.2       | Raising attainment and achievement         | Very Good |

4.4 The care inspectorate also evaluated the indicators below and found the following:

| QI number | Name of indicator                              | Grading   |
|-----------|--|-----------|
| 1.1       | Nurturing care and support                     | Very Good |
| 1.3       | Play and learning                              | Very Good |
| 2.2       | Children experience high quality facilities    | Very Good |
| 3.1       | Quality assurance and improvement are led well | Very Good |
| 4.3       | Staff deployment                               | Very Good |

- 4.5 The inspection team found that the headteacher to be held in high regard by parents/carers, partners, staff and children. He was identified as a visible and compassionate leader, ably supported by the senior leadership team. The report notes that the headteacher has led the creation of a caring, respectful learning environment where all children are known and nurtured as individuals. As a result, the ethos across the school is one of high aspiration underpinned by positive relationships.
- 4.6 The report confirms that the nursery is an important part of the school community with a strong sense of identity held by 'Team St John's'. Practitioners ensure that the vision, values and aims underpin the work of the nursery. Their recent consultation with families confirmed the importance everyone places on the vision, values and aims and the shared goal of improving outcomes for children. This is resulting in consistently high, and improving standards, with the values of respect, ambition, love, patience, and honesty demonstrated by everyone. Practitioners recognise they could support children to use the language of the values more fully.
- 4.7 Inspectors found that as leaders, the headteacher and depute of nursery are highly effective role models. They are highly respected and are very supportive of practitioners, both personally and professionally. They lead a skilled team who are invested in the vision of 'learning and growing together, through faith, hard work and love, to safely go on our way'. Together, they are a strong team.
- 4.8 The report noted that children, staff, parents/carers and partners had contributed to a review of the school's vision, values and aims in 2022. The aims reflect the Gospel values and the school's commitment to the Catholic faith. Almost all children show a high level of understanding of the school values and model them well.
- 4.9 Senior leaders have developed robust assurance processes to monitor the quality of teaching and learning. As a result, quality assurance arrangements are helping to improve standards and promote a greater consistency in high-quality learning and teaching.
- 4.10 Inspectors found that children across the school enjoy a variety of leadership responsibilities. Children at every stage are members of pupil leadership groups which aim to improve different aspects of the life and the work of the school. Through their leadership roles, children have made an important contribution towards the school achieving a range of accreditations.
- 4.11 Across the school, the positive, nurturing and welcoming ethos reflects the vision, values and aims. Almost all children demonstrate the school values consistently well. Relationships between children and staff are very positive and supportive. Children are happy, confident and highly motivated to develop as successful learners.
- 4.12 Inspectors found that in almost all classes, teachers know their children very well. A focus on improving learning environments is contributing to meeting the needs of identified learners. As a result, classrooms are well organised and provide a calm, purposeful environment for children to learn.
- 4.13 The majority of children use digital technology well to enhance and extend their learning. For example, children in P6 are developing skills in coding through writing algorithms to create a step

counter. Children in P7 developed their own video assistant referee programme to adjudicate on table football games.

- 4.14 Children told inspectors that staff know them well and almost all say they know who to talk to if they are worried or upset. In addition, older children provide additional sources of support outside classes through their responsible roles as ‘buddies’ and peer mediators. Children support and help each other, which is contributing to a positive playground environment. This contributes to almost all children reporting they feel safe.
- 4.15 All staff have a good understanding of the wellbeing indicators and use them to track the wellbeing of all children. This information is used to plan wellbeing interventions at termly Getting it Right for Every Child screening meetings between senior leaders and the class teacher. Children talk confidently about all aspects of their wellbeing.
- 4.16 Inspectors found that all staff and children are valued, respected and celebrate diversity. Children learn about equalities, diversity, and discrimination at different stages throughout the school. Children in the upper school talk very confidently about racism, sectarianism and discrimination.
- 4.17 Reliable and robust data shows high patterns of attainment in literacy and numeracy for most children over time. The school consistently performs well relative to comparator schools.
- 4.18 Across the school, children participate in a wide range of activities which help them to develop a range of skills and attributes.
- 4.19 Inspectors identified that staff take sensitive and effective action, working closely with local partners, to mitigate against barriers children face. For example, they ensure families have access to pre-loved school uniform and a clothing bank.
- 4.20 Senior leaders have maintained a dedicated focus on identifying and targeting poverty-related attainment gaps over a number of years. Currently PEF is used to fund additional staffing to implement a variety of interventions to target poverty-related attainment gaps, for example in relation to writing.

## 5.0 IMPLICATIONS

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

| SUBJECT   | YES | NO |
|---|-----|----|
| Financial   |     | N  |
| Legal/Risk  |     | N  |
| Human Resources   |     | N  |
| Strategic (Partnership Plan/Council Plan)                                     |     | N  |
| Equalities, Fairer Scotland Duty & Children/Young People’s Rights & Wellbeing |     | N  |
| Environmental & Sustainability  |     | N  |
| Data Protection   |     | N  |

## 5.2 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         |                |                  |                   |                               |                |

5.3 **Legal/Risk**

N/A.

5.4 **Human Resources**

N/A.

5.5 **Strategic**

N/A.

5.6 **Equalities and Fairer Scotland Duty**

(a) Equalities

This report has been considered under the Corporate Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) process with the following outcome:

|   |   |
|---|---|
|   | YES – Assessed as relevant and an EqIA is required.   |
| N | NO – This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a substantive change to an existing policy, function or strategy. Therefore, assessed as not relevant and no EqIA is required |

(b) Fairer Scotland Duty

Has there been active consideration of how this report’s recommendations reduce inequalities of outcome?

|   |  |
|---|--|
|   | YES – A written statement showing how this report’s recommendations reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage has been completed. |
| N | NO – Assessed as not relevant under the Fairer Scotland Duty.  |

5.7 **Children and Young People**

Has a Children’s Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment been carried out?

|   |   |
|---|---|
|   | YES – Assessed as relevant and a CRWIA is required.   |
| N | NO – Assessed as not relevant as this report does not involve a new policy, function or strategy or recommends a substantive change to an existing policy, function or strategy which will have an impact on children’s rights. |

## 5.8 Environmental/Sustainability

Has a Strategic Environmental Assessment been carried out?

|   |   |
|---|---|
|   | YES – assessed as relevant and a Strategic Environmental Assessment is required.  |
| N | NO – This report does not propose or seek approval for a plan, policy, programme, strategy or document which is like to have significant environmental effects, if implemented. |

## 5.9 Data Protection

Has a Data Protection Impact Assessment been carried out?

|   |  |
|---|--|
|   | YES – This report involves data processing which may result in a high risk to the rights and freedoms of individuals.                                    |
| N | NO – Assessed as not relevant as this report does not involve data processing which may result in a high risk to the rights and freedoms of individuals. |

## 6.0 CONSULTATION

6.1 N/A.

## 7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 See all documents relating to this inspection here: [St John's Primary School | Inspection Report | Education Scotland](#)