

Report To: Education & Communities Committee
Date: 12 March 2013

Report By: Corporate Director Education, Communities and Organisational Development
Report No: EDUCOM/20/13/AH

Contact Officer: Albert Henderson
Contact No: 01475 712761

Subject: Education Scotland report on Wemyss Bay Primary School

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform the Education & Communities Committee of an Education Scotland external evaluation of Wemyss Bay Primary School.

2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 Wemyss Bay Primary School has received a good report from Education Scotland. Members should note that in the indicators of quality four aspects of the school were judged to be 'very good' and four aspects as 'good'. The report was produced on 29 January 2013.

3.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Education & Communities Committee approve the report on Wemyss Bay Primary School.

Albert Henderson
Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development

4.0 BACKGROUND

4.1 Wemyss Bay Primary School was inspected by Education Scotland in December 2012. The inspection covered key aspects of the work of the school at all stages, identified key strengths and main points for action using the following six-point scale:

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| 6 | - | Excellent – outstanding, sector leading |
| 5 | - | Very Good – major strengths |
| 4 | - | Good – important strengths with some areas for improvement |
| 3 | - | Satisfactory – strengths just outweigh weaknesses |
| 2 | - | Weak – important weaknesses |
| 1 | - | Unsatisfactory – major weaknesses |

4.2 Education Scotland assessed and reported on the views of parents, pupils and staff, the quality of learning and teaching, how well the school was raising achievement for all pupils, achievement in national examinations, the school's processes for self-evaluation and innovation, the school's capacity for improvement.

4.3 The report was published on 29 January 2013. It has been issued to staff, parents, local elected members and the Convener and Vice-Conveners for Education & Communities.

4.4 Wemyss Bay Primary School is inspected under the evaluation framework "How Good Is Our School 3?"

4.5 In assessing the indicators of quality, Education Scotland found four aspects of the school as 'very good' and four aspects as 'good'.

4.6 The report lists five particular strengths of the school:

- Very courteous and confident children who enjoy learning
- Children's use of their literacy and numeracy skills to enhance their learning
- Staff teamwork to support children in their learning
- Staff reviewing their teaching approaches to continually improve children's learning experiences
- The headteacher's leadership in developing and promoting high-quality learning

4.7 The reports lists two areas for improvement:

- Continue to develop curricular links across different subjects and at the transition stages
- The nursery should build on children's prior learning to ensure that they are being challenged appropriately

29 January 2013

Dear Parent/Carer

**Wemyss Bay Primary School and Nursery Class
Inverclyde Council**

Recently, as you may know, my colleagues and I inspected your child's school. During our visit, we talked to parents and children and worked closely with the headteacher and staff. We wanted to find out how well children are learning and achieving and how well the school supports children to do their best. The headteacher shared with us the school's successes and priorities for improvement. We looked at some particular aspects of the school's recent work, including how children are involved in their own learning and are developing their thinking skills. We also looked at how well children are developing their leadership skills through projects including, for example, 'Education for Work'. As a result, we were able to find out how good the school is at improving children's education.

How well do children learn and achieve?

Across the nursery and school, all children are very well behaved and motivated in their learning. In the nursery class, children are very settled in their playroom and in the wider school environment. Most children approach activities with confidence, work well independently and are becoming more involved in planning their learning. Staff should build on children's prior learning to ensure that children are making effective progress. In the primary classes, children contribute to lessons and discussions very confidently and are actively engaged in their learning. They are given opportunities to be responsible for their own learning through a wide range of activities and project work. As a result, children are developing their thinking skills further and are becoming independent learners. They work very well with each other, learning through problem-solving approaches and focus well when working independently. Staff use a variety of creative teaching approaches to make learning more stimulating and exciting. The views of children are taken into account, for example, through the pupil council and the eco action team. Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is further increased as a result of their link with a primary school in Malawi and discussions with people from the world of work.

In the nursery, children are achieving well. They participate confidently in a variety of activities which help them increase their knowledge of sounds, extend their vocabulary and help them identify rhyme. They are learning to recognise numbers in charts, games, and puzzles. At the primary stages, children are achieving very well. They are developing their leadership and interpersonal skills successfully through a range of subjects, experiences, challenges and responsibilities. For example, P7 young people planned and organised a 'fun day' for the rest of the school. Across

the school, children are developing their literacy and numeracy skills, and use these skills very well across other areas of the curriculum, for example, in social subjects. Almost all children are making very good progress in reading, writing, listening and talking. They can read with confidence and answer questions succinctly about the text and what they have learned. By P7, almost all children can effectively produce extended pieces of writing. Scots language is promoted regularly through activities related to poetry, reading and when children are learning about Scotland. Children are learning the relevance of mathematics through activities and project work linked to everyday life.

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

Across the nursery and school, staff know the children very well as individuals. In the nursery, staff use their observations, assessments and children's interests effectively to help plan relevant and stimulating work. However, tasks and activities need to be more challenging to meet the needs of all children. Across the primary stages, teachers plan tasks and activities which are relevant and suitably challenging for children. Support assistants are working very well with teachers to provide focused support for children with additional learning needs. Children with complex learning needs are supported very well. Across the school, staff use Curriculum for Excellence guidance confidently to plan and evaluate children's learning. They have developed many areas of the curriculum and are sharing ideas and resources regularly. Staff are developing new ways and projects to provide children with exciting learning experiences. As a result, children are experiencing a broad and balanced curriculum. Planned whole-school activities such as 'Celebrating Diversity' week and 'Education for work' week are helping children develop skills for life and work. The school uses the local environment successfully to enhance children's learning and is developing their outdoor learning effectively. The school should continue to provide children with learning experiences that help them make links across different subjects. Arrangements to support children when they move from nursery to P1 and from P7 to Inverclyde Academy are well organised. The school should continue to ensure there is continuity in children's learning as they move from nursery to primary and then to secondary.

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

Across the school, all staff reflect frequently on their teaching approaches to make children's learning experiences more stimulating and engaging. The headteacher provides strong leadership. She has a very clear vision of improving the quality of children's learning experiences and has shared it effectively with the school community. The depute headteacher and principal teacher support the headteacher effectively to improve learning and teaching. Staff have led new developments linked to curriculum development and to other aspects of the school. Children take on roles of responsibility to improve their learning environment. Staff and children are involved in working parties and groups and are working together to develop areas of the school, for example, the eco code. The headteacher regularly visits classes to monitor learning and teaching and provides positive feedback to staff. She asks children to evaluate their school experience and asks parents about their views on school matters and uses their comments to make further improvements in

the school. Staff monitor children's performance regularly to ensure that they are making appropriate progress in their learning.

This inspection of your school and nursery class found the following key strengths.

- Very courteous and confident children who enjoy learning.
- Children's use of their literacy and numeracy skills to enhance their learning.
- Staff teamwork to support children in their learning.
- Staff reviewing their teaching approaches to continually improve children's learning experiences.
- The headteacher's leadership in developing and promoting high-quality learning.

We discussed with staff and the education authority how they might continue to improve the school and nursery class. This is what we agreed with them.

- Continue to develop curricular links across different subjects and at the transition stages.
- The nursery should build on children's prior learning to ensure that they are being challenged appropriately.

What happens at the end of the inspection?

We are satisfied with the overall quality of provision. We are confident that the school's self-evaluation processes are leading to improvements. As a result, we will make no further visits in connection with this inspection. The local authority will inform parents about the school's progress as part of the authority's arrangements for reporting to parents on the quality of its schools.

Hakim Din
HM Inspector

Additional inspection evidence, such as details of the quality indicator evaluations, for your school can be found on the Education Scotland website at <http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/inspectionandreview/reports/school/primsec/WemyssBayPrimarySchoolInverclyde.asp>

If you would like to receive this report in a different format, for example, in a translation please contact the administration team on the above telephone number.

If you want to give us feedback or make a complaint about our work, please contact us by telephone on 0141 282 5000, or e-mail: complaints@educationscotland.gsi.gov.uk or write to us addressing your letter to the Complaints Manager, Denholm House, Almondvale Business Park, Livingston EH54 6GA.

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?*¹. 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 the evaluations for Wemyss Bay Primary School.

Improvements in performance	very good
Learners' experiences	very good
Meeting learning needs	very good

Nursery class

Improvements in performance	good
Children's experiences	good
Meeting learning needs	good

We also evaluated the following aspects of the work of the school and nursery class.

The curriculum	good
Improvement through self-evaluation	very good

A copy of the full letter is available on the Education Scotland website at <http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/inspectionandreview/reports/school/primsec/WemyssBayPrimarySchoolInverclyde.asp>

¹ *How good is our school? The Journey to Excellence: part 3*, HM Inspectorate of Education, 2007, http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/Images/HowgoodisourschoolJtEpart3_tcm4-684258.pdf