

Report To: Education & Communities Committee
Date: 09 September 2014

Report By: Corporate Director Education, Communities and Organisational Development
Report No: EDUCOM/55/14/PC

Contact Officer: Patricia Cassidy
Contact No: 01475 712761

Subject: Education Scotland Report on St Joseph's 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 St Joseph's Primary School.

2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 St Joseph's Primary School has received a good report from Education Scotland. Members should note that in the indicators of quality two aspects of the school were judged to be 'very good' and three aspects as 'good'. The report was produced on 29 April 2014.

3.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Education & Communities Committee approve the report on St Joseph's Primary School.

Patricia Cassidy
Corporate Director
Education, Communities & Organisational Development

4.0 BACKGROUND

4.1 St Joseph's Primary School was inspected by Education Scotland in February 2014. 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 in 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 April 2014. It has been issued to staff, parents, local elected members and the Convener and Vice-Conveners for Education & Communities.

4.4 St Joseph's 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 two aspects of the school to be 'very good' and three aspects to be 'good'.

4.6 The report lists four particular strengths of the school:

- The leadership of the headteacher in securing significant improvements in the school.
- Responsible and motivated children who are proud of their school and are making very good progress in their learning.
- The strong teamwork and commitment of staff to providing a safe and stimulating place for children to learn.
- Strong partnerships with the local and wider community.

4.7 The reports lists two areas for improvement:

- Continue to develop approaches to tracking children's progress to ensure appropriate pace and challenge for all.
- Continue to develop the curriculum in line with national guidance.

29 April 2014

Dear Parent/Carer

**St Joseph's Primary School
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 interdisciplinary learning, partnerships and citizenship. 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?

Children enjoy learning and are very proud of their school. They benefit from the strong Catholic values which underpin the school's work. They respond positively to the various active approaches to learning in classes and across the life of the school. They work very effectively, both individually and cooperatively in pairs and teams. Almost all children demonstrate a responsible and independent attitude to learning. Children value greatly the wide range of interesting learning experiences at school. They talk confidently and enthusiastically about their learning. Older children are able to explain what they need to do to improve their work. Teachers have recently introduced 'learning journeys' which are supporting children to reflect on and take more responsibility for their learning. Children are developing a strong understanding of global citizenship and support international charities very well. Commendably, working in close partnership with the local parish community, children have raised a significant amount of money to fund the cost of building a kitchen for a school in Malawi. Children talk very proudly about this achievement. Children readily take on a range of leadership roles, such as in the school council, the health committee, as 'reading buddies' to younger children and as Junior Road Safety Officers. As a result, children are developing very important skills for life, learning and work.

Children are making very good progress across their learning. From the early stages, children have opportunities to work together in cooperative groups and, as a result, they listen well and talk confidently to each other. Across the school, children are making very good progress in their reading. By the upper stages, most are able to analyse texts well. Children enjoy reading. The majority of children can talk about their favourite authors. The school has recently taken positive and successful steps to support and motivate those children who are not making enough progress with

reading. The whole-school approach to improving writing is having a positive impact on children's writing skills. Children write very well for a range of relevant, current and motivating purposes, frequently linked effectively to topic work or to the life and work of the school. At P7, children work in pairs to write play-scripts about complex social issues such as tackling sectarianism and racism. In mathematics, most children across the school are confident in their mental and written calculations. In the best examples, children apply their skills in real-life contexts, for example, organising the weekly 'toast club' and regular Fairtrade Café. Children would benefit from more opportunities to use information and communication technology to extend their understanding of displaying information in graphs and charts. The school promotes children's health and wellbeing very well through a range of programmes and interesting activities. For example, as part of the school's plans to celebrate the 2014 Commonwealth Games, all children are participating in their own 'baton relay race' by running a mile each week and charting their progress on a map. Older children show a keen interest in ballroom dancing and their local history by their enthusiastic participation in the local community arts projects, 'Are ye dancing?' and 'Are ye asking?'.

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

Staff have created a very supportive and caring ethos across the school. They give high priority to meeting children's personal and learning needs. They provide sensitive support to those children who may require it. Overall, most lessons are set at the right level of challenge for children. However, in a few classes, children would benefit from a brisker pace of learning. We have asked the school to review the size of groups in some of the classes in order to ensure the needs of all children are fully met. Support staff provide children with helpful assistance in classes to learn alongside their classmates. The school works well with a broad range of professionals to help children who may require additional support with their learning. Across the school, children benefit from a well-planned and motivating curriculum. Staff are working well together to develop programmes and topics in line with Curriculum for Excellence. In the last three years, staff have reviewed and made significant improvements to their approaches to learning and teaching, and give children stimulating experiences through relevant, real-life contexts for learning. Children's ideas and interests help inform their learning. For example, at P2, children's keen interest in 'superheroes' is providing a stimulating context for them to develop their writing skills. Staff work hard to make relevant links across different areas of the curriculum. The school has fostered positive relationships with a range of partners to enhance children's learning including health professionals and a local community arts group. Staff recognise that they now need to develop approaches to outdoor learning. There are very good arrangements in place to ensure a smooth transition is made for children moving from P7 to St Columba's High School. Commendably, P1 teachers are very proactive in seeking information about pre-school children's achievements and progress in learning so that they can build on children's learning as soon as they begin P1.

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

The school has a clear plan in place which is helping to bring about improvements in its work. The headteacher has a very clear vision for the school and this is having a significant and positive impact. He has high expectations of children and staff. His

well-judged focus on improving approaches to learning and teaching has greatly improved children's experiences. His inclusive and enthusiastic approach has secured strong support from parents and the wider community. Staff are developing positive approaches to involving parents more fully in their children's learning. Recently, a group of parents joined their children in class to make models as part of their learning about the Vikings and castles. There is a strong sense of teamwork across the school and this has supported staff to respond positively to the brisk pace of change. Most staff take on opportunities for leadership roles and their skills and enthusiasm are used to very good effect to secure school improvements. Opportunities for staff to work with colleagues in local schools are helping to improve their approaches to assessing children's progress. The school has identified the need to continue to improve its arrangements for tracking and monitoring children's progress to ensure they all achieve as highly as possible, and has made plans to address this aspect of its work. The newly-appointed acting deputy headteacher provides very good support to the staff and headteacher. The school also values and benefits from the helpful support it receives from Inverclyde Council.

This inspection found the following key strengths.

- The leadership of the headteacher in securing significant improvements in the school.
- Responsible and motivated children who are proud of their school and are making very good progress in their learning.
- The strong teamwork and commitment of staff to providing a safe and stimulating place for children to learn.
- Strong partnerships with the local and wider community.

We discussed with staff and Inverclyde Council how they might continue to improve the school. This is what we agreed with them.

- Continue to develop approaches to tracking children's progress to ensure appropriate pace and challenge for all.
- Continue to develop the curriculum in line with national guidance.

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. As part of its arrangements for reporting to parents on the quality of education, Inverclyde Council will inform parents about the school's progress.

Jackie Maley
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/StJosephsPrimarySchoolInverclyde.asp>

If you would like to receive this letter 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 St Joseph's Primary School.

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

We also evaluated the following aspects of the work of the school.

The curriculum	good
Improvement through self-evaluation	good

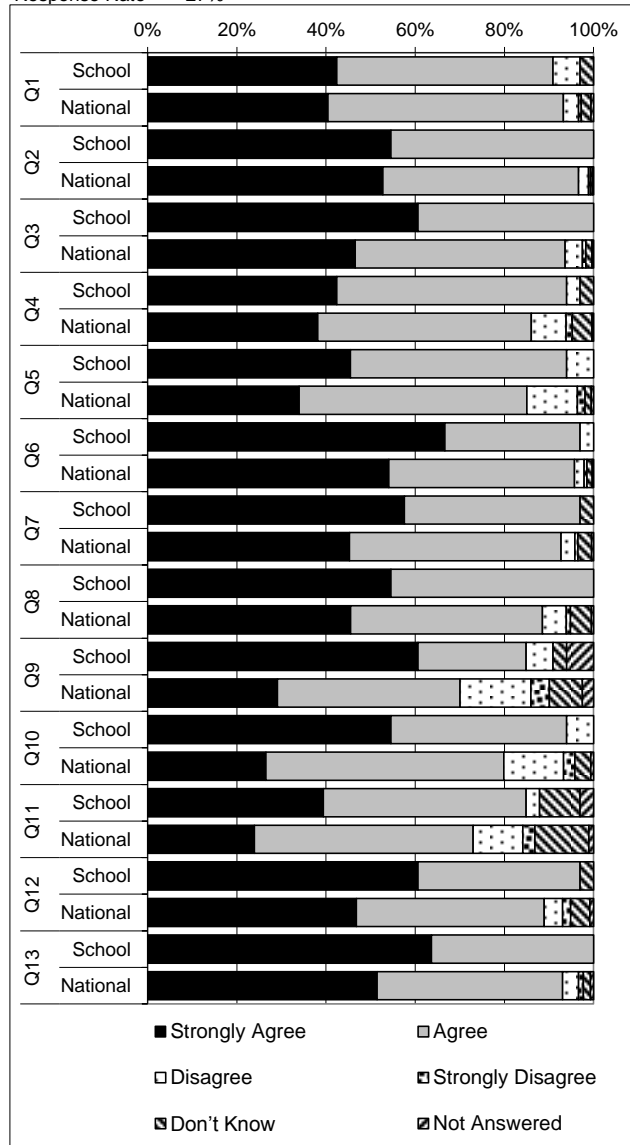
A copy of the full letter is available on the Education Scotland website at <http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/inspectionandreview/reports/school/primsec/StJosephsPrimarySchoolInverclyde.asp>

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. Please note that the term "adequate" in the document has been replaced with "satisfactory".

A sample of parents, children and young people, and all members of staff were invited to give their views of the school using a pre-inspection questionnaire. Their views informed the inspection process, including the nature of discussions in a number of meetings. Strengths and issues identified were explored by the inspection team, and the findings are included in the inspection report. The following information gives the statistical detail from those that returned questionnaires.

Parent Questionnaire Summary

Centre Name St Joseph's Primary School
 SEED Number 8641927
 Quest. Issued 121
 Quest. Input 33
 Response Rate 27%

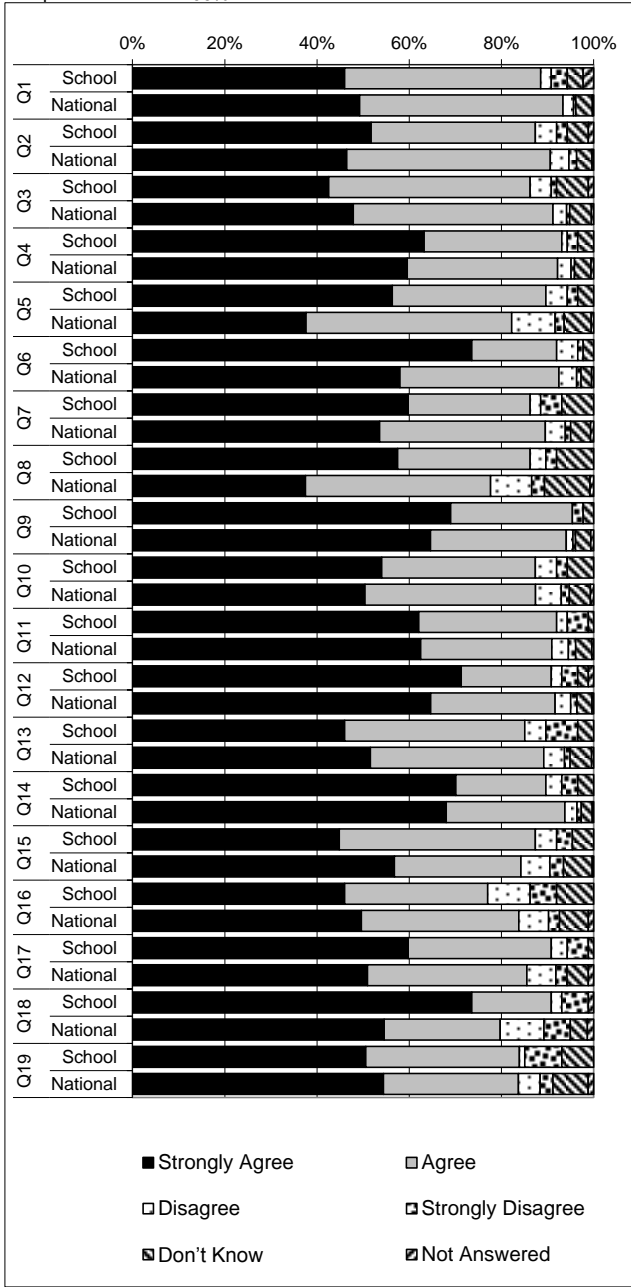


		Percentage %							
		Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know	Not Answered	Strongly Agree & Agree	Disagree & Strongly Disagree
Q1	School	42%	48%	6%	0%	3%	0%	91%	6%
Q1	National	55%	45%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%
Q2	School	61%	39%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%
Q2	National	42%	52%	3%	0%	3%	0%	94%	3%
Q3	School	45%	48%	6%	0%	0%	0%	94%	6%
Q3	National	67%	30%	3%	0%	0%	0%	97%	3%
Q4	School	58%	39%	0%	0%	3%	0%	97%	0%
Q4	National	55%	45%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%
Q5	School	61%	24%	6%	0%	3%	6%	85%	6%
Q5	National	55%	39%	6%	0%	0%	0%	94%	6%
Q6	School	39%	45%	3%	0%	9%	3%	85%	3%
Q6	National	61%	36%	0%	0%	3%	0%	97%	0%
Q7	School	64%	36%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%
Q7	National								
Q8	School								
Q8	National								
Q9	School								
Q9	National								
Q10	School								
Q10	National								
Q11	School								
Q11	National								
Q12	School								
Q12	National								
Q13	School								
Q13	National								

Note: Will not always sum to 100% due to rounding

Pupil Questionnaire Summary

Centre Name St Joseph's Primary School
 SEED Number 8641927
 Quest. Issued 87
 Quest. Input 87
 Response Rate 100%

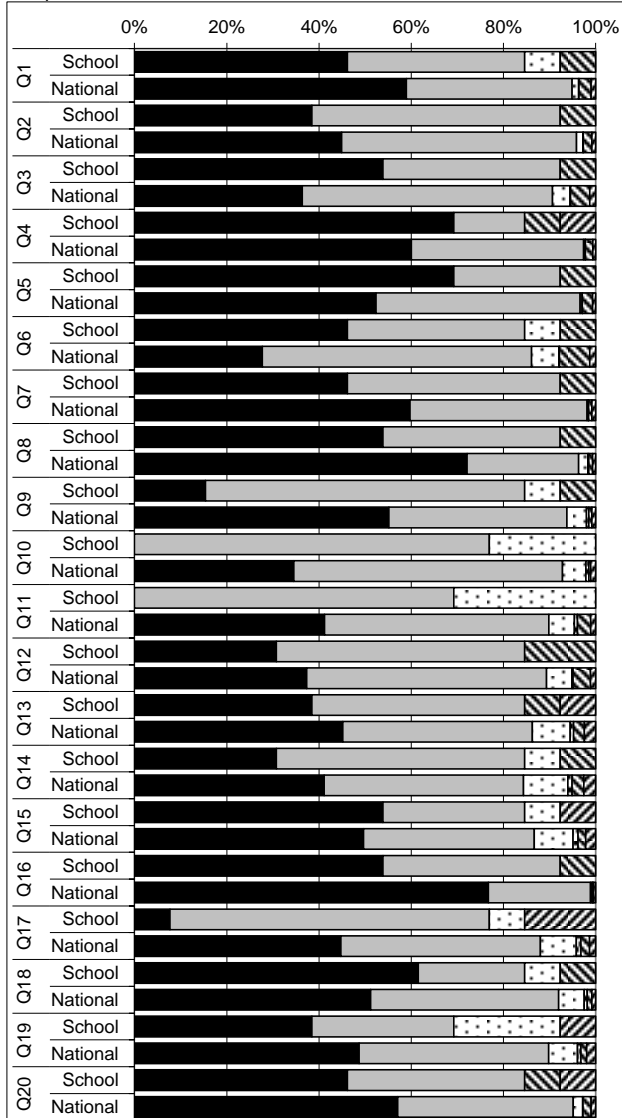


		Percentage %							
		Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know	Not Answered	Strongly Agree & Agree	Disagree & Strongly Disagree
Q1	School	46%	43%	2%	3%	3%	2%	89%	6%
	National	52%	36%	5%	2%	5%	1%	87%	7%
Q2	School	43%	44%	5%	1%	7%	1%	86%	6%
	National	63%	30%	1%	2%	3%	0%	93%	3%
Q3	School	56%	33%	5%	2%	3%	0%	90%	7%
	National	74%	18%	5%	1%	2%	0%	92%	6%
Q4	School	60%	26%	2%	5%	7%	0%	86%	7%
	National	57%	29%	3%	2%	8%	0%	86%	6%
Q5	School	69%	26%	0%	2%	2%	0%	95%	2%
	National	54%	33%	5%	2%	6%	0%	87%	7%
Q6	School	62%	30%	2%	5%	1%	0%	92%	7%
	National	71%	20%	2%	3%	2%	1%	91%	6%
Q7	School	46%	39%	5%	7%	3%	0%	85%	11%
	National	70%	20%	3%	3%	3%	0%	90%	7%
Q8	School	45%	43%	5%	3%	5%	0%	87%	8%
	National	46%	31%	9%	6%	8%	0%	77%	15%
Q9	School	60%	31%	3%	5%	1%	0%	91%	8%
	National	74%	17%	2%	6%	0%	1%	91%	8%
Q10	School	51%	33%	1%	8%	7%	0%	84%	9%
	National								
Q11	School								
	National								
Q12	School								
	National								
Q13	School								
	National								
Q14	School								
	National								
Q15	School								
	National								
Q16	School								
	National								
Q17	School								
	National								
Q18	School								
	National								
Q19	School								
	National								

Note: Will not always sum to 100% due to rounding

Teacher Questionnaire Summary

Centre Name St Joseph's Primary School
 SEED Number 8641927
 Quest. Issued 20
 Quest. Input 13
 Response Rate 65%



■ Strongly Agree □ Agree
 □ Disagree ■ Strongly Disagree
 ▨ Don't Know ▩ Not Answered

		Percentage %							
		Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know	Not Answered	Strongly Agree & Agree	Disagree & Strongly Disagree
Q1	Staff regularly discuss how to improve achievement for all pupils at both stage and whole-school level.	46%	38%	8%	0%	8%	0%	85%	8%
Q2	All pupils are given activities which meet their learning needs.	38%	54%	0%	0%	8%	0%	92%	0%
Q3	Pupils are involved in setting learning targets.	54%	38%	0%	0%	8%	0%	92%	0%
Q4	Pupils are provided with regular feedback on what they need to do to improve.	69%	15%	0%	0%	8%	8%	85%	0%
Q5	Pupils are provided with opportunities to evaluate their own work and that of others.	69%	23%	0%	0%	8%	0%	92%	0%
Q6	Staff regularly ask for pupils' views on how their learning experiences could be improved.	46%	38%	8%	0%	8%	0%	85%	8%
Q7	Pupils take an active part in their learning.	46%	46%	0%	0%	8%	0%	92%	0%
Q8	Staff treat all pupils equally.	54%	38%	0%	0%	8%	0%	92%	0%
Q9	Staff and pupils respect each other.	15%	69%	8%	0%	8%	0%	85%	8%
Q10	The pupils are well behaved.	0%	77%	23%	0%	0%	0%	77%	23%
Q11	Support for pupils with additional support needs is effective.	0%	69%	31%	0%	0%	0%	69%	31%
Q12	Parents are fully involved in the school and their children's learning.	31%	54%	0%	0%	15%	0%	85%	0%
Q13	I have been actively involved in developing the school's vision and values.	38%	46%	0%	0%	8%	8%	85%	0%
Q14	I am actively involved in setting priorities to improve the school.	31%	54%	8%	0%	8%	0%	85%	8%
Q15	I have regular opportunities to help shape the curriculum by having staff discussions and working groups.	54%	31%	8%	0%	0%	8%	85%	8%
Q16	I am aware of the school's procedures for protecting children.	54%	38%	0%	0%	8%	0%	92%	0%
Q17	Leadership at all levels is effective.	8%	69%	8%	0%	0%	15%	77%	8%
Q18	Staff communicate effectively with each other.	62%	23%	8%	0%	8%	0%	85%	8%
Q19	I have good opportunities to take part in continuing professional development.	38%	31%	23%	0%	0%	8%	69%	23%
Q20	Staff across the school share good practice.	46%	38%	0%	0%	8%	8%	85%	0%

Note: Will not always sum to 100% due to rounding

DISCLOSURE CONTROL APPLIED