

The Highland Council

Skye, Ross and Cromarty Area Committee
18 November 2015

Agenda Item	5
Report No	SRC/048/15

Education Scotland Reports – Marybank Primary School, North Kessock Primary School

Report by Director of Care and Learning

Summary

This report provides details of Education Scotland's published reports on the two schools named above.

1. Introduction to Inspections

- 1.1 Education Scotland aims to provide assurance on the quality of Scottish education and promote improvement and innovation to enhance learners' experiences and lead to better outcomes. Their inspections also contribute to National Performance Framework reporting.
- 1.2 Each year, they inspect and report on the quality of education in a sample of pre-school centres, primary schools, secondary schools, special schools, community learning and development services, colleges and residential educational provision. They also inspect the education functions of local authorities.
- 1.3 To support improvement, inspectors focus on the quality of children and young people's learning and achievement. They have a particular interest in the development of children and young people's skills and understanding in literacy, numeracy, health and wellbeing which enables access to the highest possible learning within a broad general education and beyond.
- 1.4 Details of all aspects of the work of Education Scotland along with all the reference documentation can be found on the [Education Scotland](#) website.
- 1.5 Where an Education Scotland visit shows that ongoing engagement with a school is required to ensure that improvements have been made, a follow-up visit will be scheduled, normally within 12-18 months.

2. Inspections Conducted

School	Area	Inspection Date	Nature of Inspection	Publication Date	Action
Marybank Primary	Mid Ross	19 May 2015	Full	1 September 2015	Education Scotland will make no further visits in connection with the inspection.

North Kessock Primary	Mid Ross	8 June 2015	Continued Engagement	25 August 2015	Highland Council will provide a report to Education Scotland in May 2016 to confirm that the advised improvements have taken place. If this is accepted by Education Scotland there will be no further visits in connection with the original inspection of 2013.
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2.2 Members are advised that as reports are published following inspection, they will be referred directly to Members and may be discussed at Ward Business Meetings.

2.3 In this way relevant Members will see each published report as they arrive in the relevant area, with the required degree of immediacy.

2.4 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 Education Scotland publication [How good is our school?](#) 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. A new version of [How good is our school?](#) has been published, but is not yet in use for inspections.

2.5 Education Scotland evaluations are made on a 6-point scale as follows:
Excellent/Very Good/Good/Satisfactory/Weak/Unsatisfactory
In Continued Engagement visits no evaluations are given. A brief summary of each visit is given below.

2.6 **Marybank Primary**

For the Marybank Primary School visit, the following evaluations were made:

Improvements in performance very good	very good
Learners' experiences	very good
Meeting learning needs	very good
Nursery class	
Improvements in performance	very good
Children's experiences	very good
Meeting learning needs	very good
HMI also evaluated the following aspects of the work of the school and nursery class	
The curriculum	very good
Improvement through self-evaluation	very good
Here are the Care Inspectorate's gradings for the nursery class	
Quality of care and support	very good
Quality of environment	very good
Quality of staffing	very good
Quality of management and leadership	very good

2.7 The Education Scotland visit identified the following key strengths (mentioned briefly here but described in much greater depth in the online report):

- Children's enthusiasm for learning.
- Standards of children's attainment across all curriculum areas.
- The ethos of inclusion and ambition in the school.
- Extensive partnerships with parents and the community which enrich children's learning and achievement.
- The strength of the Head Teacher, Kerrie Laird, in leading school improvement in partnership with the whole school community.

The following key recommendation was made:

- Continue to develop opportunities for children to take responsibility for learning and developing their skills independently.

The full Education Scotland Report can be found [here](#). Education Scotland will make no further visits to the school in connection with the inspection.

2.8 **North Kessock Primary School**

The revisit to North Kessock Primary School was part of Education Scotland's ongoing engagement following the original inspection report of June 2013 and a revisit in May 2014.

The May 2015 engagement identified the following key improvements since the previous visit:

- Across the primary classes, the quality of children's learning experiences has continued to improve, including monitoring learning to ensure the meeting of learners' needs
- Children increasingly show greater confidence in themselves as learners and understand what successful learning looks like
- Across the nursery and primary classes, children are developing an appropriate awareness of healthy lifestyles
- Staff have worked well together to continue to carry out a wide range of approaches to improving their work and the curriculum

The following key recommendations were made:

- There is still considerable potential to improve children's attainment, particularly in mathematics, as children move through the stages to P7
- The school should ensure that recently revised procedures for supporting and reviewing children's learning needs are implemented consistently
- Children would benefit further from more extended opportunities for making visits out and about in the local community
- There is scope to gather, and act on, the views of children and their parents about wider aspects of school provision more regularly.

The full Education Scotland Report can be found [here](#). Highland Council Officers, working with the school, have been asked to provide a letter for Education Scotland in May 2016, providing compelling evidence that the key recommendations have been addressed. If this letter is found acceptable there will be no further HMI visits in connection with the original inspection of June 2013.

2.10 As part of ongoing engagement with the Highland Council, Education Scotland may visit schools on a support basis, including the two schools covered here.

3. Actions as a Result of Inspection

- 3.1 The Authority and Head Teacher are provided with both the report and a 'record of inspection findings' (RIF).
- 3.2 These documents evidence both good practice and areas for improvement and using this, the school will adapt its School Improvement Plan and report annually about the impact on learners through the Standards and Quality Report.
- 3.3 Quality Improvement Officers will continue to work with both of these schools to ensure that improvements continue to be made and that such improvements are sustained over time.

4. Comparison

- 4.1 Members are advised that it is not possible to use Education Scotland reports to compare across schools, as the curriculum is now tailored by schools to their individual circumstances, within the overall quality indicators.
- 4.2 Furthermore, it is not possible to compare previous reports for a school with more recent reports. This is due to changes in the inspection focus from year to year, reflected in the annual "Inspection Advice Note" issued by Education Scotland.
- 4.3 The Education Scotland advice note in respect of session 2014-15 is provided through the link below, and Members will note the increased emphasis on "self-evaluation" by schools, and the targeted approach on issues for this session.
http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/resources/i/genericresource_tcm4832425.asp?strReferringChannel=educationscotland&strReferringPageID=tcm:4-615801-64&class=l1+d86716
- 4.4 Consequently, reports should be viewed as a single snap-shot of a school's performance, against a suite of national quality indicators as laid down in *How good is our school*.
- 4.5 In session 2015-16 inspection activity will reflect the most recent advice note which can be found here:
http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/resources/i/genericresource_tcm4865189.asp

5. Implications

- 5.1 There are no resources, legal, equalities, climate change/carbon clever, risk, Gaelic or rural implications arising from this report.

6. Recommendation

- 6.1 The Area Committee is asked to scrutinise and note this report on Education Scotland engagements with Marybank Primary School and North Kessock Primary School.

Designation: Director of Care and Learning

Date: 1 November 2015

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