

# Report

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| Report to:       | <b>Education Resources Committee</b>            |
| Date of Meeting: | <b>18 August 2020</b>                           |
| Report by:       | <b>Executive Director (Education Resources)</b> |

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| Subject: | <b>Education Scotland Inspection Update</b> |
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## 1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of the report is to:-

- ♦ provide an update on the work of the Curriculum and Quality Improvement Service (CQIS) in relation to supporting schools to achieve positive outcomes for inspections;
- ♦ provide an update of the outcome of school and early years' inspections 2019/2020; and
- ♦ provide an update on future developments to support schools for 2020/2021.

## 2. Recommendation(s)

2.1. The Committee is asked to approve the following recommendation(s):

- (1) that current and planned progress relating to Education Scotland inspection support be noted
- (2) that results of this year's Education Scotland inspection results for schools and Early Years' establishments be noted.

## 3. Background

- 3.1. Schools in Scotland are subject to external inspections from HMIE (Her Majesty's Inspectors of Education) who are employed by the Government body Education Scotland.
- 3.2. The number of inspections carried out within each local authority within a school session depends largely on the size of that authority. South Lanarkshire council had 14 school inspections during 2019/2020. Information on other authorities is contained within Appendix 1.
- 3.3. Inspection activity ceased following the lockdown in late March 2020.

## 4. Inspection Models

4.1. In August 2016, HMIE introduced a range of new inspection models to suit particular circumstances and contexts and to reflect the changing educational landscape.

The inspection models introduced were:-

- Full 'inspection' model
- Short 'inspection' model
- Localised thematic model
- Neighbourhood model

- 4.2. Since August 2016, for both types of 'inspection' model, HMIE inspectors have been using new quality indicators (QIs) outlined in "How good is our school?"(4th edition) (HGIOS4). In inspections of nursery classes and early learning and childcare centres, the equivalent QIs from "How good is our early learning and childcare?" (HGIOELC) have been used.
- 4.3. The Quality Indicators from HGIOS4 and HGIOELC being used during inspections have been refocused to align with the National Improvement Framework. In particular, QI 1.3 (Leadership of Change), QI 2.3 (Learning, Teaching and Assessment) and QI3.2 (Raising Attainment and Achievement) feed directly into the evidence base for the National Improvement Framework.
- 4.4. A full model of inspection evaluates four quality indicators (QIs 1.3, 2.3, 3.2 (as described above) and QI 3.1 (Ensuring Wellbeing, Equality and Inclusion), whilst a short model evaluates two (QIs 2.3 and 3.2).
- 4.5. Each QI inspected is evaluated on a 6 point scale as follows:-
1. Unsatisfactory
  2. Weak
  3. Satisfactory
  4. Good
  5. Very Good
  6. Excellent
- 4.6. The publication in 2016 of the update to the 'Statutory Guidance Standards in Scotland's Schools Etc. Act 2000' places a statutory duty on schools and local authorities to raise attainment for all and close the equity gap. There is a focus on three main areas: pupils experiencing equalities of outcome; delivery of the priorities of the National Improvement Framework; and the duty of schools and local authorities to plan and report on improvement activity around reducing socio-economic disadvantage and pursuing the NIF priorities. This has been an additional focus for inspections this session and will continue to be during 2020-2021.

## **5. Support for schools**

- 5.1. It is recognised that schools and their staff can find the process of preparing for inspection challenging. In addition, significant and rapid changes in National educational policy and inspection models over recent years have left schools less certain about new expectations for inspections.
- 5.2. In order to best prepare schools for the increased rigour and focus areas of changing educational policy, expectations around self-evaluation for improvement and the new inspection models, CQIS support and challenge for establishments has been wide-ranging. It is important to note that support is given to all schools, not just those pending inspection. This support has comprised of a number of key elements, including:
- the launch of a School Improvement Manual which provides guidance on a range of school improvement policy and practice
  - the provision of resources to support self-evaluation for self-improvement e.g. HGIOS4 and HGIOELC Toolkits, summary of inspection findings analysis and a preparation for inspection pack
  - revised School Improvement Planning and Standards and Quality Reporting frameworks which reflect all National Guidance and support self-evaluation for self-improvement. Head Teachers are provided the opportunity to attend a one

to one support and challenge 'clinic' session with the Lead Officer for School Improvement to discuss this documentation

- Validated Self Evaluation (VSE) - The VSE approach has helped establishments strengthen their self-evaluation processes and gain information which influences their School Improvement Planning and Standards and Quality Reporting processes
- the establishment of an SLC Tracking and Monitoring system for Primary and Secondary establishments respectively including training opportunities to support implementation
- focused dialogue on establishment evaluation during Quality Link Officer visits
- the continuation of a targeted Active Literacy programme to support identified schools
- the creation of the central Learning and Teaching Group which has worked to develop resources to support schools in their evaluation of learning and teaching. Schools have been offered the opportunity to participate in a Professional Learning Community Programme to further enhance consistency across establishments with particular reference to improving pedagogy for equity. An associated training programme is also planned for play based learning in the early years and a self-evaluation programme for classroom practitioners
- attendance at National and West Partnership events to support Moderation and Achievement of a Level
- the use of Statistical Summary Report (SSR) data for both primary and secondary schools, which has focussed on the use of data to inform school improvement
- the successful and increasingly popular Self-Improving Attainment Family Groups (previously called Professional Learning Trios) which focus on supporting schools with school improvement, facilitating increased collaborative activity between schools

5.3. Particular support is provided to those schools who are potentially facing an inspection in the next few years, this support includes:-

- voluntary after-school training sessions where Head Teachers are provided with the opportunity to work together on self-evaluation activities and hear from colleagues who have recently been inspected. These sessions are very well attended and evaluations of this programme are very strong. For this reason, during session 2019/2020, these sessions were opened up to all establishments
- support from a central HMle Inspection Support Team which provides professional and pastoral support to establishments through the inspection process. Evaluations from all establishments inspected identify this support as excellent or very good

5.4. Education Scotland place importance on the role of Associate Assessors (AAs) on their inspection teams. AAs are usually experienced Head Teachers who have been nominated by the authority, trained by Education Scotland, and then deployed on HMle inspections. Currently, SLC has 8 AAs. The AA Network continues to provide an opportunity for AAs within the authority to meet and discuss issues relating to inspection and to contribute to, and inform, the support provided for schools.

## **6. Inspections during session 2019/2020**

6.1. During 2019/2020, 14 South Lanarkshire Council (SLC) schools were inspected. This breaks down as:-

- 12 primaries in total – 8 primary schools experienced the full model for inspection; 6 of those primary schools with nursery classes
- 4 primary school inspections experienced the short inspection model; 1 of those primary schools with nursery classes
- 2 Secondary Schools

## **7. Outcome of inspections during session 2019/2020 Schools**

- 7.1. Of the 14 schools inspected this session, all received “positive” outcomes i.e. a grade of satisfactory or above for all Quality Indicators. There were no evaluations of either “weak” or “unsatisfactory” awarded during any inspection for any of the Quality Indicators. **Appendix 3** illustrates this.
- 7.2. In addition, there was no requirement for follow-up inspection activity as an outcome of any of the school inspections.
- 7.3. Although referenced in 3.2, it is difficult to compare school inspections across authorities because of the varying numbers involved. However, a comparative analysis which scrutinises SLC primary inspection outcomes with some comparator authorities demonstrates that SLC’s current inspection profile continues to be positive with 67.9% of inspections outcomes for the inspected Quality Indicators as good or very good compared to Aberdeenshire at 65.4%, Fife at 64.7%, Highland at 50.0% and North Lanarkshire at 56.3%.
- 7.4. An analysis of establishment’s self-evaluations compared with the evaluations that they receive during inspection activity demonstrates that there is little variance between these i.e. establishment evaluations are reasonably well aligned to those of inspection teams. Alignment is important given that, as part of the National Improvement Framework requirements for data from Local Authorities, this information is collected and evaluated by Education Scotland and helps form a view of how well we know our schools.

## **8. Early Years Establishments**

- 8.1. Early Years’ establishments and school nursery classes are inspected both by Education Scotland around the quality of educational provision using Quality Indicators and separately by the Care Inspectorate. This report only concerns inspections conducted by Education Scotland.
- 8.2. During 2019/20 7 Early Years inspection reports were published, with associated evaluative grades for Quality Indicators. All 7 inspections were inspections of nursery classes within primary schools. There were no inspections in standalone centres or partner providers this session.
- 8.3. Of the 7 nursery classes inspected this session, all received “positive” outcomes i.e. a grade of satisfactory or above for all Quality Indicators. There were no evaluations of either “weak” or “unsatisfactory” awarded during any inspection for any of the Quality Indicators.
- 8.4. In addition, there was no requirement for follow-up inspection activity as an outcome of any of these Early Years inspections.

## **9. Reporting on inspections**

- 9.1. South Lanarkshire Council reports on individual inspections through the established Area Committee structure. This allows local elected members to hear a presentation

from the Headteacher and/or Senior Officer and to ask questions around the inspection. A committee paper is prepared for each of these inspections.

- 9.2. In addition, data from inspections feeds into the evaluation of our Education Resources plan through the IMPROVE mechanism.
- 9.3. Education Resources publicises new inspection reports through the weekly Education newsletter by providing a web-link to the Education Scotland website.
- 9.4. Each school is responsible for sending communication regarding the inspection outcome to parents following an inspection. Paper copies can be made available for those who are unable to access the internet. It would be expected that a schools' inspection report and associated evidence would be fully discussed with the Parent Council. It is worth noting that the chair of the Parent Council is fully involved with the inspection and receives an advance copy of the report.

## **10. Next Steps**

- 10.1. Education Scotland have indicated that there will be no school inspections during Session 2020/2021 to allow schools to return to normal post COVID 19.
- 10.2. Formal inspections notwithstanding, it is planned that support and challenge for schools around self-evaluation continues to be developed further in order to secure further advances in school improvement. This support will be a bespoke package including professional learning opportunities, provision of resources and targeted support. It is important that Central Teams are sensitive to the particular needs of schools as they return to the "new normal" with the primary focus being on Health and Wellbeing.
- 10.3. The School Improvement Team will continue to develop the suite of resources which will further enhance support for schools' self-evaluation work and be a valuable tool to support school improvement and readiness for inspection. Two strategic school improvement groups, comprising of primary and secondary Head Teachers will continue to contribute to this workstream. In addition, consultation with these groups will ensure that future training and resources represent the ongoing needs of our establishments. CQIS will also support schools to further develop pupil voice using the "How Good Is **Our** School" toolkit to support learner participation in self-evaluation for school improvement.
- 10.4. "Self-Improving Attainment Families" will continue to be used as a vehicle to support school improvement however the VSE programme will be paused in its current format. Instead, officers will focus on continuing to support schools to build their own capacity around school self-evaluation.
- 10.5. The establishment of the national Regional Improvement Collaborative has provided an opportunity to extend our work beyond SLC to work in partnership with colleagues from other West Partnership local authorities. These opportunities will continue to be explored during session 2019/2020.

## **11. Employee Implications**

- 11.1. None

## **12. Financial Implications**

- 12.1. Financial implications are within existing budgetary resources.

### **13. Climate Change, Sustainability and Environmental Implications**

13.1. There are no implications for climate change, sustainability or the environment associated with this report.

### **14. Other Implications**

14.1. There are no implications for sustainability or risk in terms of the information contained in this report.

### **15. Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation Arrangements**

15.1. This report does not present a new strategy, policy or plan and is therefore not subject to equality impact assessment.

15.2. There was no requirement to undertake any formal consultation in terms of the information contained within this report.

**Tony McDaid**

**Executive Director (Education Resources)**

23 July 2020

### **Link(s) to Council Values/Ambitions/Objectives**

♦ Improve achievement, raise educational attainment and support lifelong learning

### **Previous References**

None

### **List of Background Papers**

None

### **Contact for Further Information**

If you would like to inspect the background papers or want further information, please contact: Carole McKenzie, Head of Education (School Improvement)

Ext: 4468 (Tel: 01698 454468)

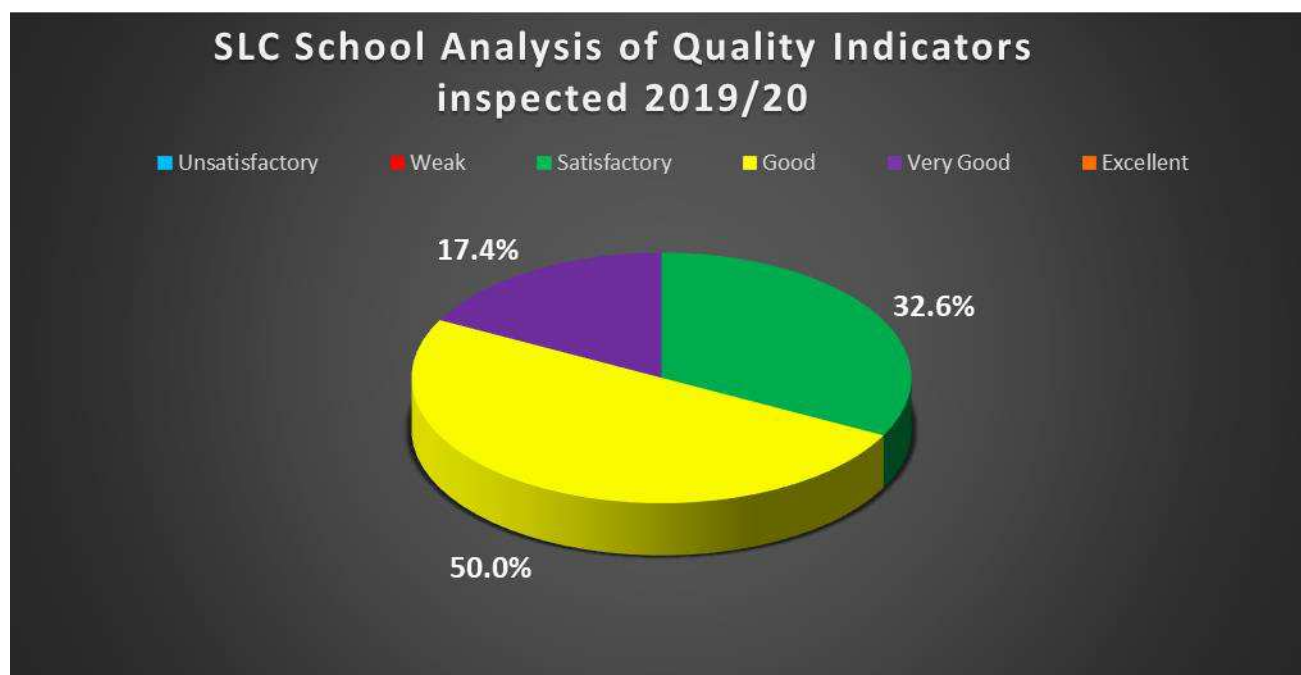
E-mail: [carole.mckenzie@southlanarkshire.gov.uk](mailto:carole.mckenzie@southlanarkshire.gov.uk)

**Appendix 1 Information available on the number of Published Inspections 2019-2020 across authorities of comparable size**

| <b>Authority</b>  | <b>Number of inspections</b> |
|-------------------|------------------------------|
| South Lanarkshire | 14                           |
| Aberdeenshire     | 9                            |
| Fife              | 12                           |
| Glasgow City      | 15                           |
| Highland          | 15                           |
| North Lanarkshire | 10                           |

| <b>Authority</b>  | <b>Number of QIs evaluated as 'good' or better</b> | <b>% of QIs evaluated as 'good' or Better</b> |
|-------------------|--|---|
| South Lanarkshire | 31   | 67.4%   |
| Aberdeenshire     | 17   | 65.4%   |
| Fife              | 22   | 64.7%   |
| Glasgow City      | 28   | 70.0%   |
| Highland          | 21   | 50.0%   |
| North Lanarkshire | 18   | 56.3%   |

## Appendix 2 SLC Analysis of Quality Indicators; Schools





### Appendix 3 SLC Analysis of Quality Indicators; Early Years

