

MINUTE of MEETING of the EDUCATION (QUALITY ASSURANCE) COMMITTEE held within COUNCIL CHAMBERS, WEST LOTHIAN CIVIC CENTRE, on 6 NOVEMBER 2018.

Present – Councillors Stuart Borrowman (Chair), David Dodds, Pauline Clark, Peter Heggie, Chris Horne, Carl John, Dave King, Dom McGuire (substituting for Andrew McGuire), Andrew Miller, Moira Shemilt and Damian Timson; Appointed Representatives Myra Macpherson and Lynne McEwen.

Apologies – Councillors Charles Kennedy, Andrew McGuire and George Paul; Appointed Representative Margaret Russell.

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Agenda Item 8: Broxburn Primary School and Nursery Class Progress

Councillor Horne declared an interest as his friend was a teacher at Broxburn Primary School and his children had attended the school within the last sixteen months and were taught by Lisa Davis, the Head Teacher presenting the report. Councillor Horne advised that he would not participate in consideration of this item of business and would withdraw from the meeting.

2. MINUTE

The committee confirmed the minute of its meeting held on 4 September 2018 as being a correct record. The Chair thereafter signed the minute.

3. VALIDATED SELF EVALUATION: BRIDGEND PRIMARY SCHOOL

The committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Education (Curriculum, Quality Improvement and Performance) providing details of the outcomes of the Validated Self Evaluation (VSE) of Bridgend Primary School.

The report outlined a number of key strengths and areas for ongoing improvement. Details of performance information for the school were provided in the report relating to attendance for session 2017/18 and teacher professional judgements for pupils achieving expected national levels in 2017/18 at Primary 1, 4 and 7.

The Head Teacher, Clare Deas, advised the committee that members of staff were happy with the key strengths outlined within the report and would continue to build on improvements being made. A review of the Leadership Team and staff remits would continue to specify responsibilities and leadership opportunities across the school. Staff were developing pupil and parent understanding of the wellbeing indicators to support accurate self-reporting of personal progress and were ensuring that robust information was being shared with parents. Members were also advised that since the VSE was carried out work was being carried

out to strengthen the Quality Indicators. Staff were also appreciative of the continued support from the Quality Improvement Team. A quality improvement day would be scheduled before the end of the session to review improvement made towards actions arising from the VSE.

The Head Teacher then responded to a number of questions from members of the committee. Members acknowledged the challenges experienced in school and were advised that systems were in place to promote equity through the Scottish Attainment Challenge and Pupil Equity Fund providing a wide range of experiences for learners, improving outcomes and reducing the attainment gap.

In response to a question relating to the support given by Linlithgow Academy the Head Teacher advised that staff were working closely with staff from Linlithgow Academy to ensure that children's transitions to the Academy were as successful as possible. Ms Deas also confirmed the number of children attending school who had been identified as being dyslexic.

The committee acknowledged the improvements made in addressing the areas identified for improvement. Members were happy with the progress made and congratulated staff for all their hard work.

It was recommended that the committee notes the contents of the report and the school's arrangements for continuing improvement.

Decision

To note the contents of the report and the update from the Head Teacher.

4. VALIDATED SELF EVALUATION: WHITDALE PRIMARY SCHOOL AND EARLY LEARNING AND CHILDCARE CENTRE

The committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Education (Curriculum, Quality Improvement and Performance) providing details of the outcomes of the Validated Self Evaluation of Whitdale Primary School and Early Learning and Childcare Centre.

The report outlined a number of key strengths and areas for ongoing improvement. Details of performance information for the school were provided in the report relating to attendance for session 2017/18 and teacher professional judgements for pupils achieving expected national levels in 2017/18 at Primary 1, 4 and 7.

The Acting Head Teacher, Lynn Findlay, advised that members of staff were happy with the findings of the VSE which reflected the improvements made, evidenced by the improved quality indicators for the ELC setting and primary school. Professional dialogue and professional learning to support staff has ensured a collaborative approach to meet the needs of all learners. Improved tracking and monitoring systems were in place to inform next steps in children's learning and the use of digital technologies were enhancing engagement in learning.

The Head Teacher then responded to questions from members of the committee. In response to a question relating to the number of authorised absences being higher than the West Lothian average, Ms Findlay advised that the school had a family link worker who was addressing attendance issues and engaging with families to ensure early interventions were in place. The Head Teacher also confirmed the number of children attending the school who had been identified as being dyslexic.

The committee was advised that a significant amount of Pupil Equity Funding was received by the school. Parents, staff, pupils and stakeholders were fully involved in discussing the best ways for the funding to be used. Outdoor learning spaces were a key priority for parents, which would provide opportunities for children to grow and engage in outdoor activities. A newsletter was also sent to parents to advise how they could provide support at home or in the community, and workshops were available over an eight week period to support parents with their children's learning. Finally, members noted that the school had a busy breakfast club which was well attended by more than 100 children a day, which provided an opportunity for children to start their day in a positive way. Activities were also in place to encourage children to attend.

The committee acknowledged the positive work carried out in school, evidenced by the strong report and the improved quality indicators. Members were confident that the school would continue on its journey of improvement.

It was recommended that the committee notes the contents of the report and the school's arrangements for continuing improvement.

Decision

To note the contents of the report and the update from the Head Teacher.

5. VALIDATED SELF EVALUATION: PEEL PRIMARY SCHOOL

The committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Education (Curriculum, Quality Improvement and Performance) providing details of the outcome of the Validated Self Evaluation carried out at Peel Primary School.

The report outlined a number of key strengths and areas for ongoing improvement. Details of performance information for the school were provided in the report relating to attendance for session 2017/18 and teacher professional judgements for pupils achieving expected national levels in 2017/18 at Primary 1, 4 and 7.

The seconded Head Teacher, Iain McDermott, advised that the school continued to build on positive approaches and staff were developing further curricular opportunities. The positive culture in school motivates and engages learners to succeed and achieve. Robust tracking and monitoring systems and frameworks for learning, teaching and

assessment were well established and learners were making good progress in literacy and numeracy. There was also a strong focus on science and technology. A clear action plan was in place which involved parents, staff and pupils. Pupil Equity Funding was used effectively to provide targeted support in literacy and numeracy for individual learners.

The Head Teacher then responded to questions from members of the committee. Members were advised that the nursery school linked to Peel Primary School had not been included in the VSE as this had recently been evaluated. In response to a question relating to teaching and learning approaches, Mr McDermott advised that staff were taking on leadership courses at all levels and were developing teaching and learning approaches which generated curiosity in learners enabling them to lead their own learning. Members of the committee were also advised of the work carried out to ensure transition from nursery school to primary school was planned in a positive manner. Finally, the Head Teacher confirmed the number of children attending the school who had been identified as being dyslexic.

The committee acknowledged the excellent report and the improvements made in addressing the areas identified for ongoing improvement.

It was recommended that the committee notes the contents of the report and the school's arrangements for continuing improvement.

Decision

To note the contents of the report and the update from the seconded Head Teacher.

6. BROXBURN PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY CLASS PROGRESS REPORT

Councillor Horne did not participate in consideration of this item of business and withdrew from the meeting.

The committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Education (Curriculum, Quality Improvement and Performance) providing details of the progress made towards the actions arising from the school's Education Scotland inspection in November 2016.

The report advised that an inspection was carried out by Education Scotland in November 2016 and an authority evaluation took place in September 2018. The report outlined the progress made since the Education Scotland inspection and the areas for ongoing improvement.

The Head Teacher, Lisa Davis, advised that she was delighted with the progress update highlighting the progress made and actions taken to ensure school improvements were being made. All teachers have engaged in focussed professional learning to increase consistency of good practice across the school. The school has continued to develop high quality learning experiences across the curriculum through staff

planning collegiately, ensuring breadth and challenge in learning. Approaches to improve learning and teaching were ongoing to ensure appropriate pace and challenge for all pupils in order to maximise attainment and achievement by the end of Primary 7. The school has made good progress tracking children's progress using national benchmarks.

The Head Teacher then responded to questions from members of the committee. Work has been ongoing to engage with parents. The school benefits from a supportive and very proactive Parent Council and an enthusiastic and committed Fundraising Group. Ms Davis advised that since the inspection was carried out by Education Scotland staff have worked hard to embed their vision for learners ensuring that the school values were well understood and evident in the actions of all members of the school community.

Finally, the Quality Improvement Manager, Greg Welsh, advised that having supported the school during the evaluation process he was confident that the quality indicators which had improved from "satisfactory" to "good" would continue to improve.

The committee was pleased with the improvements made and members were confident that the school would continue to address identified areas for improvement.

It was recommended that the committee notes the contents of the report and the school's progress in addressing identified areas for improvement.

Decision

To note the contents of the report and the update from the Head Teacher.

7. WORKPLAN 2018-2019

The committee noted the workplan which had been circulated for information.

Decision

To note the contents of the workplan.