

DATA LABEL: PUBLIC



EDUCATION QUALITY ASSURANCE COMMITTEE

EDUCATION SCOTLAND REPORT: UPHALL PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY

REPORT BY HEAD OF EDUCATION (PRIMARY)

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To bring to the Committee's attention Education Scotland's report on the progress of Uphall Primary School to address the areas for improvement identified in the Education Scotland report published on 14 May 2019.

B. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Committee note the contents of the report and the school's arrangements for continuing improvement.

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I Council Values	Focusing on our customers' needs; Being honest, open and accountable; Developing employees; Making best use of our resources; Working in partnership
II Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)	Education (Scotland) Act 1980 Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2014
III Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers	None
IV Impact on performance and performance Indicators	Education Scotland quality indicators are used to measure the performance of schools – How Good Is Our School?4 (HGIOS?4).
V Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement	Positive inspection reports are used as a key outcome measure in the Single Outcome Agreement. Positive is measured by satisfactory or better in the quality indicators used by Education Scotland.

VI Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)	School's Devolved Budget/Pupil Equity Funding
VII Consideration at PDSP	Not applicable
VIII Other consultations	None

D. TERMS OF REPORT

Background

Date of continuing engagement inspection	25 th and 26 th October 2021
School roll	248
Nursery Roll	40
Staffing and date of appointment of management team	Head Teacher (Nov 2020) Acting Depute Head Teacher (Jan 2021) Principal Teacher (April 2021) 0.8 Acting Principal Teacher (March 2019) 16.5 Teachers 1 Early Years Officer 5 Early Years Practitioner 6 Pupil Support Worker Administrative Assistant 0.5 Clerical Assistant Supervisory Assistant Breakfast Club Assistant
Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) – 1 st being most deprived and 67 th being least deprived	SIMD Rank – 3148.17 Order 35 out of 68 West Lothian Primary Schools
Pupil Equity Fund Allocation	£80,311.86

Context of the school

Uphall Primary School and Nursery serves the villages of Uphall and Ecclesmachan, set within the Broxburn Cluster. The school has 11 classes with 3 composite classes at P2/1, P3/2, P5/4. There is also a small group setting provision for identified pupils with additional support needs. The ELC capacity is 56/56 with 12 full day places. In November 2020 the current Head Teacher was appointed and has effectively led the school with the support of Acting DHT, appointed in January 2021, and 2 Principal Teachers.

2021/22 GIRFEC Levels (% of students)

Stage	Roll	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Nursery	53	92.45%	1.89%	5.66%	0.00%
P1	24	95.83%	4.17%	0.00%	0.00%
P2	24	54.17%	45.83%	0.00%	0.00%
P3	34	61.76%	32.35%	2.94%	2.94%
P4	38	78.95%	21.05%	0.00%	0.00%
P5	35	51.43%	48.57%	0.00%	0.00%
P6	44	65.91%	31.82%	2.27%	0.00%
P7	50	60.00%	34.00%	6.00%	0.00%
School	249	74.14%	45.12%	20.91%	20.48%

Level 1 (Core): Needs are met within the classroom by teacher

Level 2 (Targeted): A higher level of support possibly in consultation with agencies outwith education

Level 3 (Enhanced): The child's additional support needs require input from two, or more, support services and/or different agencies

Level 4 (Intensive): Referral to SORG who will allocate alternative provision

Context of the report

In May 2019, Education Scotland published a report on Uphall Primary School. The letter set out a number of areas for improvement which were agreed with the school. Inspectors discussed the school's capacity to improve with West Lothian Council. Inspectors from Education Scotland committed to return to carry out a further inspection of the school within one year of publication of the May 2019 report. Due to the impact of COVID-19 pandemic, re-engagement with Education Scotland was delayed until November 2021 when Scottish Government School Guidance restrictions had eased.

The report in May 2019, identified four key areas for improvement for the school

- Work as a team to develop effective approaches to school improvement to better support the strategic direction and pace of change across the whole school community.
- Improve approaches to learning and teaching to ensure children's experiences are of a consistently high quality across the school.
- Ensure robust assessment and moderation arrangements provide reliable evidence to better inform and support progress in learning.
- Develop a shared understanding and improved approaches to planning, monitoring and tracking of children's progress in attainment and achievement in order to improve outcomes for all children.

In November 2021, Education Scotland visited the school again and looked at the particular areas that had been identified in the original inspection. They also considered other aspects of the school's work including the impact of the pandemic on Uphall Primary School and the actions taken to support recovery, children's health and wellbeing, learning and progress.

Re-engagement Findings

Inspectors stated that the school has made significant progress addressing recommendations and responding to the challenges resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. They will make no further visits to the school in connection with the inspection and noted the following key strengths of the school

- The calm and effective leadership provided by the headteacher ensured children, families and staff were well supported. The staff team demonstrated a real commitment to ensuring positive outcomes for all children.
- Local authority and school recovery plans have a strong focus on recovery and improvement. Health and wellbeing is central to these plans and there are signs of the positive impact this is having across the school. Staff have created individual wellbeing and learning supports to meet the needs of all children.
- The school continues to strengthen its relationships with children and their families through regular communication.
- The headteacher has re-energised the school. Children and staff confidently shared their successes, the challenges they have faced and steps they have taken to support recovery and renewal. Children spoke proudly of each other and staff. All staff, led by the headteacher, have made significant progress in addressing school improvement in a number of important ways.
- Positive and effective teamwork at all levels is now a strength of the school. The headteacher has brought a clarity of vision, consults effectively and pays close attention to the wellbeing and professional learning needs of staff at all levels. As a result, staff now make a valuable contribution to improving all aspects of the school through self-evaluation and leading improvement priorities.
- Good progress is being made in improving the quality of learning and teaching and effective professional learning is helping to bring about greater consistency in all classes.
- The headteacher and leadership team are focused on improving outcomes for children. They have established clear structures to ensure effective planning, monitoring and tracking is in place and is reviewed regularly.

Teacher Professional Judgement

Data was not collected in 2019/20 by the Scottish Government due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Pupils Achieving Expected National Curriculum for Excellence Levels – Primary 1

2020/21	Roll	Reading	Writing	Listening & Talking	Numeracy
School	22	90.91%	90.91%	95.45%	90.91%
Authority	2067	82.58%	80.89%	87.71%	84.76%
National	N/A	76.61%	74.05%	83.96%	81.07%

2018/19	Roll	Reading	Writing	Listening & Talking	Numeracy
School	42	97.62%	95.24%	95.24%	97.62%
Authority	2191	86.03%	83.61%	90.73%	88.00%
National	N/A	81.53%	79.04%	86.86%	84.70%

2017/18	Roll	Reading	Writing	Listening & Talking	Numeracy
School	40	77.50%	77.50%	87.50%	92.50%
Authority	2133	81.76%	79.75%	85.70%	85.70%
National	N/A	81.28%	78.30%	87.02%	84.65%

Pupils Achieving Expected National Curriculum for Excellence Levels – Primary 4

2020/21	Roll	Reading	Writing	Listening & Talking	Numeracy
School	35	71.43%	62.86%	80.00%	68.57%
Authority	2162	80.25%	77.15%	89.82%	81.54%
National	N/A	73.32%	66.67%	82.04%	71.59%

2018/19	Roll	Reading	Writing	Listening & Talking	Numeracy
School	50	84.00%	84.00%	84.00%	84.00%
Authority	2237	83.64%	79.93%	90.34%	82.03%
National	N/A	78.02%	72.71%	85.38%	76.79%

2017/18	Roll	Reading	Writing	Listening & Talking	Numeracy
School	57	87.72%	84.21%	85.96%	89.47%
Authority	2206	81.37%	76.70%	87.76%	81.41%
National	N/A	77.49%	71.81%	84.55%	75.84%

Pupils Achieving Expected National Curriculum for Excellence Levels – Primary 7

2020/21	Roll	Reading	Writing	Listening & Talking	Numeracy
School	51	68.63%	62.75%	88.24%	74.51%
Authority	2216	82.27%	78.25%	89.89%	80.32%
National	N/A	75.74%	69.01%	82.32%	71.90%

2018/19	Roll	Reading	Writing	Listening & Talking	Numeracy
School	46	78.26%	73.91%	91.30%	82.61%
Authority	2265	83.89%	80.44%	91.48%	82.47%
National	N/A	79.84%	73.68%	85.61%	75.99%

2017/18	Roll	Reading	Writing	Listening & Talking	Numeracy
School	41	85.37%	85.37%	95.12%	78.05%
Authority	2193	81.94%	78.16%	88.46%	79.16%
National	N/A	78.75%	72.87%	84.10%	74.77%

Quality Improvement Officer Role

The Quality Improvement Team will continue to work with the Head Teacher and school staff on the delivery of the school's improvement plan and will monitor the school's progress through the school's self-evaluation processes.

E. CONCLUSION

Inspectors are confident that the school has the capacity to continue to improve and so we will make no more visits in connection with this inspection. Education Scotland will inform parents of the school's progress in addressing the improvement actions and West Lothian Council will inform parents about the school's progress as part of its annual arrangements for reporting on the quality of provision.

F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

Education Scotland Inspection Report May 2019
<https://education.gov.scot/media/1muilv1x/uphallpsncins140519.pdf>

Appendices/Attachments:

Appendix 1 – Education Scotland Summary of Visit

Contact Person: Catriona Macrae (Education Officer)
Tel: 01506 282279
Email: catriona.macrae@westlothian.gov.uk

Contact Person: Greg Welsh, Interim Head of Education (Primary)
Tel: 01506 281673
Email: greg.welsh@westlothian.gov.uk

Date of meeting: 11 January 2022

Summary of visit to Uphall Primary School and Nursery Class

About this summary document

Her Majesty's Inspectors of Education (HM Inspectors) have prepared this document following a recent visit to Uphall Primary School and Nursery Class that they carried out along with officers from West Lothian Council. It contains more detail than the letter we sent to parents/carers. We hope that schools will find this document helpful to continue to support recovery, renewal and improvement work.

About our visit

We made the commitment some time ago to revisit Uphall Primary School and Nursery Class following a previous inspection, and our recent visit was arranged to fit in with the school's individual circumstances.

All of the activities undertaken by HM Inspectors during the visit were discussed in advance with the headteacher and with local authority officers. Taking into account the COVID-19 pandemic, some activities have been carried out remotely.

The visit included discussions to consider the progress made by the school since the original inspection. HM Inspectors also explored the impact of the pandemic on the school as well as the actions being taken to support recovery. HM Inspectors recognise that some priorities may have been paused or overtaken as the school responded to the pandemic.

Current context of the school – impact of COVID-19

Uphall Primary School and Nursery Class is situated in the village of Uphall in West Lothian, serving the Uphall and Ecclesmachan areas. The school faced significant challenges brought on by COVID-19. This included providing support for vulnerable families, managing staff absence, using technology to deliver learning and engaging all children in remote learning. However through these challenges, the school community has strengthened and supported each other. The headteacher was appointed in November 2020. Her strong strategic leadership has supported the school community well, and the staff team are committed to ensuring positive outcomes for all children. Whole school nurture approaches have ensured children feel supported and safe. As a result, children are now demonstrating more resilience in learning.

Steps the establishment is taking in relation to COVID-19 recovery

All staff recognise the impact the COVID-19 pandemic has had on children, particularly those who are vulnerable or who have barriers to their learning. Staff have created bespoke wellbeing and learning supports to meet the needs of individuals. This includes targeted small group support, access to counselling and continued weekly check-ins for a few families. The headteacher continues to utilise staff flexibly to manage staff absence and ensure the continuity of learning for all children. Effective use of digital technologies supports children who are isolating to access learning.

The implementation of local authority and school recovery plans has ensured a focus on relevant priorities to address the needs of all children. Health and wellbeing is central to recovery planning. Universal and targeted approaches support children with their social, emotional and mental wellbeing. Robust analysis of both formative and summative assessment data has allowed staff to identify any gaps in learning. They have put in place appropriate interventions, which are effectively meeting the needs of individuals. The school continues to strengthen its relationships with families and learners through regular communication. The school has evolved its vision in partnership with families, staff and children. As a result, the school's vision now reflects its current context and underpins the caring ethos and culture of the school community.

Safeguarding

The headteacher has taken appropriate action to address the area for improvement cited at the original inspection. Teachers have developed the health and wellbeing curriculum to ensure there is a strong focus on supporting children's understanding of their emotional wellbeing. All children have identified a trusted adult in school who they can ask to speak at any time. Children speak positively about this approach and articulate the impact this has on their emotional wellbeing. The headteacher has developed an assembly programme with a strong focus on the wellbeing indicators. Questionnaire data gathered by the school shows a significant increase in the number of children reporting that they now feel safe in school.

Work as a team to develop effective approaches to school improvement to better support the strategic direction and pace of change across the whole school community.

Working together, local authority officers, senior leaders and HM Inspectors identified strengths, progress and areas for further consideration during the visit.

Very good progress has been made in taking forward this area for improvement.

The headteacher has an energetic and transparent leadership style which is supporting the school and community to realise the vision they have worked together to set. She has established a positive mindset across the school and leads change at a pace appropriate to the challenging context created by the pandemic. Children and staff are upbeat and solution focused. This has built trust and confidence in her leadership and that of the senior leadership team. As a result, staff believe strongly in the improvement actions she has set for the school and are committed to achieving them.

The school plan sets out clear and relevant improvement priorities based on robust self-evaluation. The priorities rightly have a strong focus on improving learning and teaching and there is clear evidence of their impact within classes across the school.

The headteacher has established teacher leadership groups. These have been fundamental to the success of teacher-led professional learning and capacity building. Teachers are rightly proud of their work in leading improvements across the school. A well-planned collegiate calendar ensures the work of the groups is shared with all staff. Staff monitor and evaluate new initiatives and approaches to ensure they lead to improved experiences for children across the school.

Pupil Support Workers (PSWs) participate in regular, well-planned professional learning. They value this highly and speak positively about their role in taking forward improvements in learning and teaching. They have had a particularly positive impact on the school's work to develop health and wellbeing. All PSWs have completed a programme of study through the Open University to develop their skills in supporting the social and emotional wellbeing of children. They apply their knowledge effectively when working with individuals and small groups.

The senior leadership team have reviewed approaches to providing interventions for children who require additional support with their learning. A more strategic approach is now ensuring that data informs the decisions made in planning this support. Senior leaders monitor interventions to ensure there is impact in closing the attainment gap.

The pace of change has been appropriate and has supported staff wellbeing. The staff team are now ready to increase the pace of change. Senior leaders and staff should continue to use robust self-evaluation to inform school improvement planning.

Improve approaches to learning and teaching to ensure children's experiences are of a consistently high quality across the school.

Working together, local authority officers, senior leaders and HM Inspectors identified strengths, progress and areas for further consideration during the visit.

Good progress has been made in taking forward this area for improvement.

There is a clear commitment to improving learning and teaching across the school. Most children are settled in class, respectful to their teachers and peers, and can stay on task. The headteacher and staff recognise that this needs to be a continuing priority. They should continue to work as a team to further develop approaches to differentiation.

Children say their teachers work hard to ensure they understand what they are learning about and how they will know if they have been successful. They commented very positively on the flexible nature of many of their tasks to bring about the right levels of challenge.

Teachers have created learning spaces within and out with the classroom that enable child-led approaches to learning. They make good use of available space to enhance teaching and enable children to share their own learning journeys through displays. The use of digital learning approaches also enable children to talk about their learning. Children spoke positively about the efforts of their teachers to provide interesting learning experiences during periods of remote learning.

Staff professional learning has had a strong focus on promoting positive relationships. This has been a growth area for the school during the pandemic. 'Zones of regulation' help children make sense of the emotions they feel on a daily basis. Children feel their teachers care for them and they value their positive relationships with adults in the school. Staff manage children's behaviour in a consistent and sensitive manner. A few children receive well-planned, targeted support for their social and emotional needs. The newly introduced small group setting is providing effective support for children who require a higher level of support.

Teacher leadership groups focus on improving approaches to literacy and English, numeracy and mathematics and health and wellbeing. They have created an agreed lesson structure, a

statement on agreed expectations and 'non-negotiables' for each curricular area. This work is beginning to have a positive impact on learning and teaching.

Teachers have built on work started to support remote learning in planning across a level. As a result, children experience increasingly consistent approaches to learning and teaching across the school. Teachers are keen to build on this approach to planning across a level to share and develop their practice.

There continues to be scope to embed further and deepen the understanding of the pedagogical approaches teachers now use in their day-to-day work. This will continue to build capacity to improve teaching further. It will also build teachers' confidence to be innovative and creative.

Ensure robust assessment and moderation arrangements provide reliable evidence to better inform and support progress in learning.

Working together, local authority officers, senior leaders and HM Inspectors identified strengths, progress and areas for further consideration during the visit.

Satisfactory progress has been made in taking forward this area for improvement.

Staff have rightly focused on improving teachers' pedagogical understanding of quality learning and teaching, particularly through the pandemic. They now recognise the need to strengthen approaches to assessment and moderation and ensure they make a measurable difference to children's attainment and achievement.

The headteacher and senior leadership team are successfully building capacity across the school through professional learning and focused discussions with staff. All teachers have engaged in professional learning to develop their understanding of and approaches to moderation at a stage and school level. They are at the early stages of engaging in moderation activities. Opportunities to engage in moderation with cluster colleagues have the potential to develop teachers' approaches to using assessment to inform planning.

Most teachers use formative assessment strategies effectively during lessons. They provide ongoing feedback to children within lessons to support learning. Teachers should continue to engage in professional learning and share their practice to ensure approaches to assessment are consistent throughout the school. Teachers should ensure children understand the role of formative assessment in helping them to identify their strengths and next steps in learning.

Develop a shared understanding and improved approaches to planning, monitoring and tracking of children's progress in attainment and achievement in order to improve outcomes for all children.

Working together, local authority officers, senior leaders and HM Inspectors identified strengths, progress and areas for further consideration during the visit.

Good progress has been made in taking forward this area for improvement.

The headteacher and senior leadership team are focused on improving outcomes for children. They have established suitable arrangements to ensure planning, monitoring and tracking are in place and reviewed regularly. The senior leadership team are realistic about the progress they

have made and provide important professional learning for staff to improve further this aspect of the school's work.

Senior leaders and teachers now use the local authority tracking tool. Regular excellence and equity meetings provide valuable opportunities for senior leaders and teachers to discuss children's progress. They identify children who are not on track and plan supports and interventions for individuals and groups. Staff should continue to develop their skills in analysing and using data to inform their planning and improve outcomes for all.

PSWs provide effective targeted support to groups and individuals. They work well with teachers to plan for children and contribute to the ongoing monitoring and evaluation of support and interventions.

Senior leaders have made good use of attainment data to identify classes requiring significant additional support. There are early signs of progress in these classes. Senior leaders should continue to use data in this way to support the school's work to improve attainment for all. All teachers now use local authority progression pathways to plan learning for all curricular areas. This is leading to greater consistency in children's experiences as they move through the school. An increase in stage and level planning is supporting teachers to develop a shared understanding children's progress within a level. Senior leaders should now support teachers to plan using relevant and creative contexts.

Importantly, throughout the pandemic and resulting transitions in and out of school, the headteacher has ensured staff take full account of the varying extent to which children have progressed in their wellbeing and learning. Close relationships and regular work with families has enhanced this work.

What happens next?

Understandably, the school has been responding to the challenges resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. These have had a significant impact on the work of the school. Staff are implementing plans to support recovery. Staff have addressed the recommendations from the original inspection successfully. As a result, we will make no more visits to the school in connection with the original inspection. West Lothian Council will continue to inform parents about the school's progress as part of its usual arrangements for reporting on the quality of its education service.