



EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE: 23 SEPTEMBER 2014

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT – THE JOURNEY TO EXCELLENCE 2013/14

Report by Director of Education and Children's Services

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To provide the Comhairle with an analysis of pre-school and school reviews and Education Scotland/Care Inspectorate reports for session 2013-14 with regard to continuous improvement.

COMPETENCE

- 1.1 There are no legal, financial or other constraints to the recommendation being implemented.

SUMMARY

- 2.1 Under the Standards in Scotland's Schools Act 2000, the Comhairle is charged with securing improvement in the schools for which it has responsibility. The quality improvement procedures of the Comhairle define how staff support and challenge schools to enable them to secure continuous improvement on the journey to excellence. Education Scotland carry out a number of school inspections each session as an external evaluation of the standard and quality of education provided. Similarly, the Care Inspectorate carries out routine inspections of pre-school centres and services such as fostering and adoption. The Care Inspectorate is an independent body that was set up by the Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010 (Part 5) to help improve care services in Scotland.

RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 **It is recommended that the Comhairle note the content of the Report.**

CONTACT OFFICER: Agnes Macdonald, Senior Education Officer 01851 822747

BACKGROUND PAPERS: Standards in Scotland's Schools Etc. Act 2000
Quality Improvement Policy and Procedures
Care Inspectorate Reports (Pre-school Centres, Fostering and Adoption)
HMIE Inspection Reports (Pre-schools, Primary and Secondary Schools)

BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The Standards in Scotland's Schools Etc. Act 2000 was one of the Scottish Parliament's first pieces of legislation. Section 2 deals with the duty of Education Authorities. It states: "An Education Authority shall endeavour to secure improvement in the quality of school education which is provided in the schools managed by them; and they shall exercise their functions in relation to such provision with a view to raising standards of education."
- 4.2 Reviewing school performance is part of the process of raising standards. The Act defines this aspect: "An education authority shall, as respects each school managed by them, from time to time, review the quality of education which the school provides and if they conclude in any such review that the school is not performing satisfactorily they shall take such steps as appear to them to be requisite to remedy the matter."
- 4.3 In response to this legislation, the Comhairle, as part of its Quality Improvement Policy and Procedures, puts in place an annual programme of school reviews known as Assisted Self Evaluations. The Quality Indicators which are used in this process are produced by Education Scotland and are contained in the document "How Good is our School". It is important that processes are rigorous and reliable in order to provide support to schools on their journey to excellence.
- 4.4 The Director of Education and Children's Services is confident that Senior Education Officers know their schools well and that they make sound judgments on performance.
- 4.5 Education Scotland inspections and internal reviews (ASEs) focus on five key performance indicators:
- 1.1 Improvements in performance
 - 2.1 Learners' Experiences
 - 5.3 Meeting Learning Needs
 - 5.1 The curriculum
 - 5.9 Improvement through self-evaluation.
- 4.6 Each indicator is judged against six levels:
- Excellent:** outstanding or sector leading
Very good: major strengths
Good: important strengths with areas for improvement
Satisfactory: strengths just outweigh weaknesses
Weak: important weaknesses
Unsatisfactory: major weaknesses
- 4.7 Establishments which are evaluated as satisfactory or better in the five key performance indicators are considered by Education Scotland to have had a positive report.
- 4.8 Reviews undertaken by Senior Education Officers closely match those of the published inspection reports and demonstrate a sound and reliable understanding of the educational standards being attained in schools.
- Care Inspectorate inspections of pre-school centres and services, focus on four key indicators:
- Quality of Care and Support
 - Quality of Environment
 - Quality of Staffing
 - Quality of Management and Leadership
- Each Care Inspectorate indicator is graded using a six-point scale:
- Excellent
 - Very good
 - Good
 - Adequate
 - Weak
 - Unsatisfactory

ASSISTED SELF EVALUATION IN SCHOOLS/PRE SCHOOLS

- 5.1 In line with the revised Quality Improvement Policy, Officers of the Comhairle carry out a planned programme of quality assurance visits, planned jointly with schools. The focus of Assisted Self Evaluation (ASE) visits is agreed with each school prior to the visit. One ASE was carried out in session 2013 – 2014:

ASE Evaluation Summary 2013-14					
School	1.1 Improvements in performance	2.1 Learners' experiences	5.1 The curriculum	5.3 Meeting learning needs	5.9 Improvement through self-evaluation
Sgoil nan Loch - ASE November 2013	Good	Good	Satisfactory	Good	Satisfactory

- 5.2 Following recommendations arising from the Validated Self-evaluation (VSE) of Education and Children's Services in December 2013, the programme of ASEs was supplemented by a number of school VSEs. This involves working in partnership with establishments where the department is confident that internal quality assurance processes are robust.
- 5.3 Officers worked with staff in Bernera Primary School (March 2014), Lionel Primary School (April 2014) and Stornoway Primary School (May 2014) to validate their processes, evidence and self-evaluation ratings.

CARE INSPECTORATE INSPECTION OF PRE-SCHOOL GROUPS UNDER THE DIRECT MANAGEMENT OF CNES

- 6.1 Each year, a number of pre-schools are selected by the Care Inspectorate for inspection.
- 6.2 The following table shows the inspection grades for the nine pre-school establishments, under the direct management of the Comhairle, which were inspected in 2013-14:

Pre-School Groups under direct management of CNES						
2013-14 (9 Pre-schools)	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Adequate	Weak	Unsatisfactory
Quality of care & Support	11%	56%	22%	11%	0%	0%
Quality of Environment	22%	33%	0%	33%	0%	11%
Quality of Staffing	22%	44%	33%	0%	0%	0%
Quality of Management & Leadership	22%	44%	22%	11%	0%	0%

CARE INSPECTORATE INSPECTION OF PRE-SCHOOLS WHICH ARE NOT UNDER THE DIRECT MANAGEMENT OF CNES

- 6.3 Three pre-school centres, not under the direct management of the Comhairle, were inspected by the Care Inspectorate in session 2013 – 14. The following table shows the inspection grades:

Pre-School Groups not under Direct Management of CNES						
2013-14 (3 Pre-schools)	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Adequate	Weak	Unsatisfactory
Quality of care & Support	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Quality of Environment	67%	33%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Quality of Staffing	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Quality of Management & Leadership	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%

HMIE INSPECTION OF SCHOOLS

- 7.1 Each year, a number of primary and secondary schools are selected by Education Scotland for inspection. The following table shows a summary of 2013-14 inspections and follow-through/continuing engagement activities:

SCHOOLS	QUALITY INDICATORS				
	1.1 Improvements in Performance	2.1 Learners' Experiences	5.3 Meeting Learning Needs	5.1 The Curriculum	5.9 Improvement through self evaluation
Eoligarry School 17.9.13	Satisfactory	Good	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Sgoil na Pairc 3.12.13	Satisfactory	Good	Satisfactory	Weak	Weak
The Nicolson Institute 25.2.14	Continuing engagement visit – No further visits required.				
Sgoil Dhalabroig June 2014	QIO Report to HMIE – Continued progress and monitoring				

CARE INSPECTORATE INSPECTION OF FOSTERING AND ADOPTION SERVICES

- 8.1 Care Inspectorate officers carry out routine inspection of fostering and adoption services. The table below shows a summary of the Comhairle inspections in session 2013-14:

Service	QUALITY INDICATORS		
	Quality of Care and Support	Quality of Staffing	Quality of Management and Leadership
Fostering	Good	Very Good	Good
Adoption	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good

HISTORICAL DATA

- 9.1 It is useful to look over the previous sessions to reflect on trends in performance. The following tables show pre-school and school data:
- 9.2 Care Inspectorate inspections of the Comhairle Pre-schools in session 2012-13:

2012-13 (9 Pre-schools)	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Adequate	Weak	Unsatisfactory
Quality of care & Support	0%	56%	44%	0%	0%	0%
Quality of Environment	11%	33%	56%	0%	0%	0%
Quality of Staffing	0%	67%	33%	0%	0%	0%
Quality of Management & Leadership	11%	44%	44%	0%	0%	0%

- 9.3 2012-13 Care Inspectorate inspections of Pre-schools, not under the management of the Comhairle:

2012-13 (3 Pre-schools)	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Adequate	Weak	Unsatisfactory
Quality of care & Support	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Quality of Environment	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Quality of Staffing	0%	67%	33%	0%	0%	0%
Quality of Management & Leadership	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%

9.4 2011-2012 Education Scotland inspections of schools:

School and Publication Date	QUALITY INDICATORS				
	1.1 Improvements in Performance	2.1 Learners' Experiences	5.3 Meeting Learning Needs	5.1 The Curriculum	5.9 Improvement through self evaluation
The Nicolson Institute 30:08:2011	Weak	Good	Satisfactory	Good	Satisfactory
Sir E Scott School 29:05:2012	Very Good	Good	Good	Satisfactory	Weak
lochdar Primary 19:06:2012	Good	Very Good	Good	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

CONCLUSION

10.1 The 2013-14 data shows that, while Western Isles schools, pre-schools and fostering and adoption services are performing well overall, there is room for improvement. Raising standards is the priority for all teaching staff and Officers. To achieve this, Officers of the Comhairle are working with schools and pre-school centres to:

- Deliver high quality learning and teaching in all educational settings;
- Ensure effective, accountable leadership for all;
- Improve the use of data to secure excellent outcomes for all learners.