

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Report by the Executive Director of Educational Services

Education and Lifelong Learning Committee: 11 January 2012

Subject: Arrangements for Inspecting Schools in Scotland

1. Purpose

- 1.1** This report asks Members to note the new arrangements for inspecting Scotland's schools and nurseries. It advises members about how the new arrangements will impact on West Dunbartonshire Council and asks Members to approve revised reporting arrangements to the Education and Lifelong Learning Committee on the subject of school inspections.

2. Background

- 2.1** There are new arrangements in place for inspecting schools in Scotland. The following information summarises these changes for members of the Education and Lifelong Learning Committee. The complete document can be found at www.hmie.gov.uk/AboutUs/InspectionResources.

3. Main Issues

- 3.1** Education Scotland aims to provide assurance to stakeholders and to promote improvement and successful innovation that enhances learners' experiences and leads to better outcomes for them. Inspections also contribute to National Performance Framework (NPF) reporting.
- 3.2** Education Scotland, HMIE want to support schools to improve. To do so, inspections will focus on the quality of children and young people's learning and achievement. They will have a particular interest in how the school is developing 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.
- 3.3** They will use what they learn during their time in school to evaluate the school's capacity to improve and to answer the following questions.
- How well do children and young people learn and achieve?
 - How well does the school support children and young people to develop and learn?
 - How well does the school improve the quality of its work?

The inspection will provide an overall evaluation of the quality of the school's provision. The first two key questions (above) will be answered clearly in the report and will be followed by text which explains the answers. For the third question, "How well does the school improve the quality of its work?", they will provide an expression of confidence. They will also indicate any continuing engagement activities they might have with the school.

In providing answers to these questions, inspectors will use the following quality indicators from *The Child at the Centre* (second edition) and *How Good Is Our School?* (third edition) to support evaluations of the school's work and provide information on how the school can improve. They will also apply the following Quality Indicators to cross refer with Curriculum for Excellence.

Quality Indicators (QIs)

How well do children and young people learn and achieve?

- 1.1 Improvements in performance
- 2.1 Learners' experiences

How well does the school support children and young people to develop and learn?

- 5.1 Curriculum
- 5.3 Meeting learning needs

How well does the school improve the quality of its work?

- 5.9 Improvement through self-evaluation

3.4 Engagement with stakeholders

Inspectors will engage with children, young people and staff throughout inspection week.

In addition there will be opportunity for voluntary meetings with staff and the inspection team for professional dialogue.

The Lay Member of the inspection team acts as the key link with the parent community and will meet the Chair of the Parent Council.

- 3.5** After the inspection, within 7 working days, a draft letter for parents will be provided to the Head Teacher, the Education Authority and to the Chairperson of the Parent Council. A further 7 days is given to provide comments on the draft letter. The letter will **not** contain a list of the QI evaluations. A range of information relating to the inspection will be published online. West Dunbartonshire will include the QI evaluations when reporting the inspection findings to the Education and Lifelong Learning Committee.

- 3.6** The "follow-through" inspections are no longer part of the new arrangements. There are four broad "continuing engagement" activities beyond the original inspection

- **No further inspection activity** (satisfied with the overall quality of provision)
- **Additional Support for Improvement** (satisfied with overall quality of provision and that most of the school's self-evaluation processes are leading to improvement. The authority will support the school to build further capacity for improvement).

- **Continued inspection** (the school needs additional support and time to make the necessary improvements. The most appropriate form of support will be discussed with the District Inspector and the Education Authority. HMIE will return within an agreed timescale)
- **Innovative Practice** (satisfied with the overall quality of provision. During the inspection, aspects of innovative practice were identified, which HMIE would like to explore further in order to share with others).

3.7 West Dunbartonshire's Quality Improvement Service will continue to report to Education and Lifelong Learning Committee. Where the inspectors have expressed overall satisfaction with the quality of provision, Members will receive a self-evaluation summary paper within one year of the inspection, undertaken by the school and moderated by the Quality Improvement Service. Where inspectors have identified that the school needs more support and more time to make the necessary improvements Members will receive a 6 monthly update as to progress.

4. People Implications

4.1 The District Inspector has undertaken development work with the Quality Improvement Service and head teachers with regard to HMIE's new arrangements.

5. Financial Implications

5.1 There are no financial implications as a result of this report.

6. Risk Analysis

6.1 Failure to implement the new inspection arrangements would have a significant impact on both standards and the reputation of West Dunbartonshire Council.

7. Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA)

7.1 As this report reports on changes to be implemented by a third party and does not in itself involve policy development or a change in service delivery by the Council there is considered to be no equalities impact on the part of the Council connected to this report. If changes require to be made by the Council at a future date to accommodate the new style inspection regime, the proposed changes will be Equalities Impact Assessed.

8. Strategic Assessment

8.1 The proposals within this report reflect the Council's strategic priorities with particular reference to the delivery of Fit for Purpose Services.

8.2 The results from inspection activity within Educational Services contributes to the Council's Assessment and Improvement Plan.

8.3 The positive results from West Dunbartonshire's inspections will contribute to the continuing development of a high quality education service.

9. Conclusions and Recommendations

9.1 Arrangements for inspecting Scotland's schools and nurseries have changed as detailed in Section 3 of this report.

9.2 The committee is recommended to:

- note the new arrangements in place for inspecting schools in Scotland; and
- agree to the revised reporting arrangements on inspection activity to the Education and Lifelong Learning Committee.

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Appendices: None

Background Papers: None

Wards Affected: All Wards