

PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL

Scrutiny Committee

25 April 2022

SUMMARY REPORT ON CARE INSPECTORATE AND EDUCATION SCOTLAND INSPECTIONS

Report by Executive Director (Education and Children's Services)
(Report No. 22/97)

PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report provides an overview of the performance of Education and Children's Services inspected and reported over the past two years by the Care Inspectorate and Education Scotland, since the previous report of this type in 2020, and sets out the Service's approach to implementing improvement actions arising out of inspection. A report was not prepared in 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic which led to a pause in inspection activity.

1. BACKGROUND

1.1 Care Inspectorate

1.1.1 Regulated care services in Scotland are inspected by the [Care Inspectorate](#) using a range of quality frameworks, each with key questions and quality indicators. Services are measured against the National Health and Social Care Standards.

Where inspected, each key question and contributing quality indicator is graded on a 6-point scale in which 1 = unsatisfactory, 2 = weak, 3 = adequate, 4 = good, 5 = very good and 6 = excellent.

1.1.2 The Care Inspectorate conducts unannounced inspections for all regulated services as the main inspection method unless there are practical reasons that this is not appropriate. There are longer intervals between inspections for better performing services and a greater focus on risk-based inspections for poorly performing and high-risk services such as those which provide 24-hour residential care.

1.1.3 Following an inspection, the Care Inspectorate may set out a series of:
Recommendations: statements that set out actions the care service provider should take to improve or develop the quality of the service.
Requirements: statements which set out what is required of the care service provider to comply with relevant legislation.

1.1.4 Care service providers must submit an action plan to the Care Inspectorate addressing any requirements and recommendations identified. Progress against the action plan is monitored by the Care Inspectorate through annual

return and self-assessment forms submitted by the care service provider and through subsequent inspection.

1.2 Education Scotland

1.2.1 Education Scotland inspects and reports on the quality of education in Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) settings, primary schools, secondary schools, special schools, community learning and development services, colleges, and residential educational provision.

ELC Settings/Schools

1.2.2 For ELC inspections, the [How good is our early learning and childcare \(HGIOELC\)](#) framework is used. For school inspections, a selection of the [How good is our school \(HGIOS4\)](#) Quality Indicators (QI) are evaluated on a six-point scale.

1.2.3 A further QI is negotiated with the school which will enable school staff and inspectors to focus on a particularly challenging issue or new initiative, with the aim of bringing about improvement through professional dialogue. This QI will not be evaluated on the six-point scale. In addition, inspections will incorporate themes from other QIs, and these themes will be reviewed regularly to ensure they remain relevant.

1.2.4 A short letter is provided to report the inspection, highlighting strengths and aspects for development, and includes a table indicating the QI evaluations against the six-point scale. The inspection evidence gathered during the inspection is published online as a document called the Summarised Inspection Findings (SIF).

1.3 Joint Inspections

1.3.1 The Care Inspectorate and Education Scotland undertake joint inspections of nursery classes and ELC settings, reported publicly, in one report produced jointly by both scrutiny bodies. In each report, there will still be separate evaluations of both the QI considered by Education Scotland and the Care Standards considered by the Care Inspectorate. No joint inspections have been published since the previous version of this report.

1.4 Analysis of Inspection Outcomes

1.4.1 There are a number of factors which make the analysis of the inspection gradings complex over this reporting period. These factors include:

- Improvements and changes to the inspection models and quality frameworks such that it is not possible to make direct comparisons across each year;
- The number of inspections carried out within the local authority area varies from year to year; and
- The selection of quality indicators and themes can vary from inspection to inspection.

2. SERVICES PROVIDING DAY CARE FOR CHILDREN

- 2.1 This section presents an overview of the performance of services providing day care for children inspected over the past two years (2020/21 - 2021/22) where Perth and Kinross Council is the registered provider, and for services registered as funded partners¹. This includes childminders with funded childcare places. The Care Inspectorate Inspection Reports are reported to the Executive Sub-Committee of Lifelong Learning Committee by exception where any grading has been awarded an evaluation of unsatisfactory, weak, or excellent. In the past two years, no services have been reported for receiving excellent gradings. Two services were graded as unsatisfactory or weak.
- 2.2 All twelve inspections of services providing day care for children in 2020/21 – 2021/22 were unannounced.
- 2.3 To date, in 2020/21 – 2021/22, 81% of grades awarded were good or better, similar to the previous year and above national and comparator benchmarks. The proportion of excellent and very good grades awarded in 2020/21 – 2021/22 is 46%, an increase from 37% in 2019/20. Appendix A provides further details and interpretation of the overall figures. The current inspection position of all settings indicates a positive picture relative to national and comparator benchmarks, across all Quality Themes.
- 2.4 Appendix B shows performance from 1 April 2013 to 24 February 2022 by Quality Theme for all inspected services providing day care. Overall, every theme shows consistently high performance. The Quality of Staffing and Leadership and Management shows improvement in the latest year's inspection.
- 2.5 It is common for only certain QI to be assessed during an inspection. When looking at individual indicators, care must be used in interpretation as some may be evaluated less frequently than others and therefore subject to greater change from year to year.
- 2.6 Education and Children's Services continues to monitor, support, and challenge all centres through a planned programme of improvement visits.

3. SUPPORT AND RESIDENTIAL CARE SERVICES

3.1 Woodlea Cottage

- 3.1.1 The Care Inspectorate undertook an unannounced inspection of Woodlea Cottage in March 2020. Woodlea Cottage is a care home service providing respite and short breaks for up to five children aged from 7 to 18 with severe, complex, and enduring needs arising from learning and physical disabilities. Children using the service can do so for up to 28 consecutive days. Staff also

¹At the time of writing, information available for services inspected and published between 1 April 2020 and 24 February 2022.

provide an outreach service to children and their families, although this is not part of the registered care service.

- 3.1.2 The Care Inspectorate identified a number of strengths and the inspection found, using its new Quality Framework, the key questions “How well do we support children and young people's wellbeing” and the “How well is our care and support planned” to be Very Good. The key questions of “How good is our leadership”, “How good is our staffing” and “How good is our setting” were not inspected.
- 3.1.3 The findings of this inspection and an update on progress made towards implementing the areas for improvement were reported to the Executive Sub-Committee of Lifelong Learning Committee on 2 November 2020 ([Report No. 20/207 refers](#)). Woodlea Cottage was first inspected in November 2010. The grading history for the latest inspections are shown in Appendix C, indicating a change to new quality indicators. This service has received consistently high gradings over this period and is operating at an outstanding level of quality for children and families with complex care and support needs.

4. ELC SETTINGS AND SCHOOLS – EDUCATION SCOTLAND INSPECTIONS

- 4.1 This section presents an overview of the performance of Perth and Kinross Council's ELC settings, including partner providers, and schools inspected by Education Scotland and reported to the Executive Sub Committee of Lifelong Learning Committee up to 21 March 2022.
- 4.2 Education Scotland paused inspection activity from March 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. They undertook follow-through recovery visits from September to December 2021. For the period 2020/21 – 2021/22, one primary school and one secondary school had very positive follow-through inspections. No further inspections are to take place by Education Scotland throughout the rest of this academic session, although recovery visits will take place where schools and nurseries request them. A combined summary of achievement (2016/17 to date) is shown in Appendix D.
- 4.3 Performance against comparator local authorities and Scotland as a whole is shown in Appendix E. Perth and Kinross Council consistently outperforms both the comparator group of local authorities and the Scotland average across both the primary school and ELC sectors, particularly when looking only at indicators graded as Very Good or better. There are insufficient secondary school inspections to allow for comparison.
- 4.4 Areas for improvement identified during an inspection are addressed through a School Action Plan. Progress against the plan is monitored and a report prepared for parents/carers (and is also shared with the Area Lead Officer) within one year of the report being published.
- 4.5 Inspection reports are scrutinised by members of the Executive Sub-Committee of the Lifelong Learning Committee.

Thematic Inspections

- 4.6 In November 2021, Education Scotland carried out three thematic reviews nationally. These were on the themes of outdoor learning, approaches to supporting young people's wellbeing and local approaches to recovery. A number of PKC schools participated in this process. The [Successful Approaches to Learning Outdoors](#) findings were published in February 2022 featuring a PKC case study from FossoPlay Outdoor Nursery.

Planning for Improvement

- 4.7 Over the last two years, while external scrutiny by Education Scotland has been paused, improvement work has continued across all schools and settings.
- 4.8 All schools fully returned to in-school learning in August 2020. Schools were supported to create recovery plans in line with the Scottish Government's recommendations and these were discussed during termly meetings with Quality Improvement Officers. School improvement work for session 2020/21 continued with a focus on the core areas of literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. Termly quality improvement meetings were held with all school management teams. Schools adapted and adjusted plans in line with changes to Scottish Government guidance and moved to remote learning from January 2021 until the phased return between February and April 2021. Guidance was produced to support all schools to create remote learning plans which included live interaction between pupils and school staff. Planning was also undertaken to ensure that, where required, remote learning could be delivered after pupils returned to school buildings.
- 4.9 The in-person programme of school improvement visits ceased over the period of 2020/21 due to COVID-19 restrictions. However, quality improvement discussions between Quality Improvement Officers and school management teams regarding curriculum, attainment, improvement priorities continued on a termly basis through virtual interaction with schools. Surveys of pupils, parents and staff were undertaken. Schools maintained contact with parents remotely and provided regular information updates and met with parents to report on individual pupil progress. Many schools continued to undertake school improvement development work and staff training sessions remotely.
- 4.10 All schools and ELC settings completed Standards and Quality Reports for session 2020/21, which were published for parents in June 2021. Reports included information about achievement, learner's experiences and leadership opportunities. Remote learning, progress in digital literacy and the impact of Pupil Equity Funding were outlined and schools evaluated their progress against national quality improvement indicators from within HGIOS4.

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

- 5.1 The analysis of the gradings and reports by the Care Inspectorate and Education Scotland provide positive confirmation that the standards and

quality in our services remain high and set a clear agenda for continuous improvement.

5.2 Whilst the COVID-19 pandemic has had an impact on the way that quality in schools and ELC setting is assured by external bodies and the education authority, performance as indicated by SQA results and Curriculum for Excellence Achievement of Levels indicates that standards have been maintained or improved.

5.3 It is recommended that the Committee:

- (i) Scrutinises and comments as appropriate on the contents of the report; and
- (ii) Agrees for this report to go to the next Executive Sub-Committee of Lifelong Learning Committee once dates have been agreed after the local government elections in May 2022.

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1. IMPLICATIONS, ASSESSMENTS, CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

Strategic Implications	Yes / None
Community Plan / Single Outcome Agreement	Yes
Corporate Plan	Yes
Resource Implications	
Financial	None
Workforce	None
Asset Management (land, property, IST)	None
Assessments	
Equality Impact Assessment	None
Strategic Environmental Assessment	None
Sustainability (community, economic, environmental)	None
Legal and Governance	None
Risk	None
Consultation	
Internal	Yes
External	None
Communication	
Communications Plan	None

1. Strategic Implications

Community Plan / Single Outcome Agreement

1.1 This section sets out how the proposals relate to the delivery of the Perth and Kinross Community Plan/Single Outcome Agreement in terms of the following priorities:

- (i) Giving every child the best start in life;
- (ii) Developing educated, responsible and informed citizens;
- (iii) Promoting a prosperous, inclusive and sustainable economy;
- (iv) Supporting people to lead independent, healthy and active lives; and
- (v) Creating a safe and sustainable place for future generations.

This report relates to Objective No. (i) and (ii).

Corporate Plan

1.2 This section sets out how the proposals relate to the achievement of the Council's Corporate Plan Objectives:

- (i) Giving every child the best start in life;
- (ii) Developing educated, responsible and informed citizens;
- (iii) Promoting a prosperous, inclusive and sustainable economy;
- (iv) Supporting people to lead independent, healthy and active lives; and
- (v) Creating a safe and sustainable place for future generations.

This report relates to Objective No. (i) and (ii).

1.3 The report also links to the Education & Children's Services Vision, Values and Priorities in respect of the following key Priority areas:

- Best Start
- Learning and Achievement

2. Resource Implications

Financial

2.1 N/A

Workforce

2.2 N/A

Asset Management (land, property, IT)

2.3 N/A

3. Assessments

Equality Impact Assessment

3.1 Under the Equality Act 2010, the Council is required to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between equality groups. Carrying out Equality Impact Assessments for plans and policies allows the Council to demonstrate that it is meeting these duties.

The proposals have been considered under the Corporate Equalities Impact Assessment process (EqIA) with the following outcome:

- (i) Assessed as **not relevant** for the purposes of EqIA.

Strategic Environmental Assessment

3.2 The Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 places a duty on the Council to identify and assess the environmental consequences of its proposals.

However, no action is required as the Act does not apply to the matters presented in this report. This is because the Committee are requested to note the contents of the report only and the Committee are not being requested to approve, adopt or agree to an action or to set the framework for future decisions.

Sustainability

3.3 Under the provisions of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003, the Council has to discharge its duties in a way which contributes to the achievement of sustainable development. Under the Climate Change

(Scotland) Act 2009 the Council also has a duty relating to climate change and, in exercising its functions must act:

- In the way best calculated to delivery of the Act's emissions reduction targets.
- In the way best calculated to deliver any statutory adaption programmes.
- In a way that it considers most sustainable.

The proposals have been considered but are not applicable for this report.

Legal and Governance

3.4 N/A

3.5 N/A

Risk

3.6 N/A

4. Consultation

Internal

4.1 Relevant Heads of Service and Service Managers within Education and Children's Services have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

External

4.2 N/A

5. Communication

5.1 In the case of an initial Education Scotland inspection of a school, a public meeting is held after the publication of the inspection report with invitations going to parents, the local elected members, and members of the Lifelong Learning Committee. These meetings give parents, carers, and other members of the community the opportunity to discuss the findings of the inspection and to be consulted on the areas for improvement to be taken forward.

Where further inspection activity is carried out, Education Scotland will report publicly to parents and stakeholders. Other continuing engagement activities undertaken by Perth and Kinross Council will also be reported to parents and stakeholders. This includes the publication of reports to parents on Extended Learning and Achievement Visits and follow-up reports on the school's website and on each school's page on www.pkc.gov.uk.

2. BACKGROUND PAPERS

The following background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (and not containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to a material extent in preparing the above report:

- Education Scotland Inspection reports, published by [Education Scotland](#).
- Care Inspectorate Inspection reports, published by the [Care Inspectorate](#).
- Standards and Quality in Schools, Learning Communities and Pre-School Centres/Day Care of Children, Executive Sub-Committee of Lifelong Learning Committee, 2 November 2020 ([Report No. 20/205 refers](#) & [Report No. 20/206 refers](#)) and 1 November 2021 ([Report No. 21/200 refers](#)) and 21 March 2022 ([Report No. 22/58 refers](#)).
- Care Inspectorate Inspections of Support and Residential Care Services for Children and Young People, Executive Sub-Committee of Lifelong Learning Committee, 2 November 2020 ([Report No. 20/207 refers](#)).

3. APPENDICES

Appendix A: Summary of performance, services providing day care of children inspected by the Care Inspectorate

Appendix B: Grading History, services providing day care of children inspected and published by the Care Inspectorate, 2013/14 onwards

Appendix C: Grading History Woodlea Cottage

Appendix D: Cumulative Overview of Education Scotland Inspections in 2016/17 - 2021/22 by Performance Indicator

Appendix E: Cumulative ELC Settings and Primary School Inspection Performance relative to Comparator Authorities, by Education Scotland Quality Indicator, Academic Years 2016/17 – 2021/22