

Follow Through Visit Report

School Name: Buckstone Primary School and Nursery

Date: March 2025 (Revisit October 2025)

Background

Education Scotland undertake an annual sample of inspections across Scotland (approximately 240 per year) covering nursery, primary, special and secondary schools. A letter to parents and carers about each inspection is published approximately three months after the inspection. On the basis of this letter the school, with the support of the authority, amends its improvement plan to take account of any agreed areas for improvement.

Buckstone Primary School and Nursery was inspected in September 2023. In March 2025, a Quality Improvement Manager and three Quality Improvement Education Officers from The City of Edinburgh Council visited Buckstone Primary School and Nursery. They visited classes and worked closely with the Head Teacher, the senior leadership team and wider staff to evidence the progress and improvements which the school had made. They also met with groups of children and a parent/carer focus group.

Report

During the inspection visit in 2023, Education Scotland evaluated the **School** as follows:

Quality Indicator	Evaluation
1.3 Leadership of change	Very Good
2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment	Good
3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion	Very Good
3.2 Raising Attainment and Achievement	Very Good

During the inspection visit in 2023, Education Scotland evaluated the **Nursery** as follows:

Quality Indicator	Evaluation
1.3 Leadership of change	Good
2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment	Satisfactory
3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion	Good
3.2 Securing children's progress	Good

The inspection team found the following strengths in the school's work:

- The strong, compassionate leadership of the headteacher is supported well by the senior leadership team. Together they provide direction and encouragement to ensure and improve the wellbeing of the children and staff.
- Children have high levels of attainment in literacy and numeracy across the school.
- The inclusive ethos and culture across the school and nursery class supports very positive and respectful relationships.

The following areas for improvement were identified and discussed with the headteacher and a representative from The City of Edinburgh Council.

- Senior leaders should develop further the way in which learning is planned and assessed in the nursery class. This is to ensure children benefit from high-quality learning and make the best possible progress.
- Senior leaders and staff should continue to develop the quality of teachers’ practice so that all children experience high-quality learning and teaching that consistently meets their needs.

School Roll					420	Learning Community		Boroughmuir High School	
						Care Experienced %		0.7%	
SIMD 1 and 2 %					0.95%	EAL %		13.8%	
Scrutiny Grades						QI 1.3	QI 2.3	QI 3.1	QI 3.2
HMIE School (date)						Very Good	Good	Very Good	Very Good
School Standards & Quality Report (June 2025)						Very Good	Good	Very Good	Good
HMIE Nursery						Good	Satisfactory	Good	Good
Nursery Standards & Quality Report (June 2025)						Good	Good	Good	Good
No of Pupils with ASN	No of EAL Pupils	No of Care Experienced Pupils	No of Young Carer Pupils	No of Complex Needs	No of pupils with attendance below 85%	No of Exclusions 23-24	No of Exclusions 24-25	No of Flexible Timetables	
75	58	3	0	0	9	0	0	0	

Recommendation 1: Findings and Next Steps

Findings (March 2025)

Appropriate progress in the nursery has been made against this area using national and local guidance to drive improvements.

Children engage with a range of quality experiences, with access to both indoors and outdoors throughout the day. The environment is well organised and provides spaces for children to explore independently.

Senior leaders have guided and supported staff to review and develop more effective planning approaches. The nursery environment is planned with a focus on challenge within the interactions, experiences and spaces.

New planning approaches have been developed ensuring that there is a balance between intentional and responsive planning. Children’s interests and ideas are taken forward both in the moment and within intentional planning. There is a clear focus on skills across learning.

Systems to monitor learning and teaching and to track children’s progress are in place and are leading to practitioners developing confidence in demonstrating children’s progress over time.

Parents expressed high praise for their relationships with the nursery team, highlighting the strong partnership between staff and families in supporting and achieving the best outcomes for their children.

Next Steps

The team should continue to strengthen their observation skills to ensure they are recording significant learning more regularly to underpin their professional judgements on children's progress.

This will strengthen the current approaches for tracking and monitoring progress helping to ensure the best possible outcomes for all children.

Findings (October 2025)

Through professional learning and modelling, senior leaders have supported staff to strengthen their use of observation skills. Observations now better inform the robust tracking system and provide strong evidence of the progress that children make.

Next Steps

Senior leaders should continue to embed quality assurance of reporting to families to ensure that they have clearer information on the progress that children are making.

Recommendation 2: Findings and Next Steps

Findings (March 2025)

The school improvement plan was relaunched by the new Head Teacher in October 2024 with learning and teaching as a key focus. There was meaningful collaboration with the Parent Council, and families report positive changes in leadership and the improvement journey of the school.

Staff are developing their ability to meet diverse learning needs, although the pace of learning is not yet consistently appropriate for all. This should remain as an area of focus, especially for children who have transitioned into Primary 1.

A consistent language of learning is not yet evident across the school. Although there are examples of best practice, learning intentions and success criteria were not used consistently well to support learning and teaching.

Respectful relationships between staff and pupils are evident throughout the school. This creates a nurturing and inclusive environment, although opportunities for children to lead their learning requires further development.

Next Steps

Senior leaders should continue to support staff to improve the pace and challenge of learning. Peer modelling could be an appropriate tool to improve consistency across the school.

Senior leaders should continue to support staff to develop their approaches to differentiation to ensure that all learners are appropriately challenged and supported.

Review the Learning and Teaching Policy to ensure that there is a clear understanding of high-quality learning and teaching across the school.

Findings (October 2025)

The school has made good progress in improving the quality of learning and teaching. Under the highly effective leadership of the Head Teacher, there is a strong culture of professional collaboration, reflection and improvement, resulting in a calm, purposeful and inclusive learning environment where almost all learners are actively engaged and motivated.

The relocation of Primary 1–3 has strengthened the free-flow play-based approach, improving progression and continuity across the Early Level. Senior leaders and staff have developed a progressive curriculum with appropriate pace, challenge and shared understanding of numeracy progression, leading to greater consistency in planning and assessment.

The implementation of the four-phase model lesson and the updated 'Great Practice Statement – Learning, Teaching and Assessment' are promoting greater consistency and high-quality interactions. Almost all staff structure lessons effectively and use a range of differentiation approaches and digital tools to enhance engagement and deepen understanding.

Staff collaborate effectively through professional learning focused on pedagogy and outcomes. As a result, most lessons now demonstrate well-paced, appropriately challenging learning. Learning environments are well organised, promoting independence and learner voice. The achievement of the Rights Respecting Schools Gold Award reflects the school's strong commitment to children's rights, participation and responsibility.

Next steps

Senior leaders should continue to develop the use of high-quality questioning to deepen children's thinking and extend their responses. Staff should build on examples of current strong and effective practice which already exists within the school to ensure that this is consistent across all stages. This will further promote higher-order thinking, stimulate curiosity and support formative assessment.

There are good examples of effective personalisation and choice across the school where children are meaningfully involved in leading their learning. Building on this practice, staff should continue to extend these approaches more consistently across all classes.

Summary

The Quality Improvement Education team found that Buckstone Primary School and Nursery School had now made appropriate progress in the areas highlighted by Education Scotland in 2023. The Quality Improvement Education Officer for the school will continue to work with the Head Teacher to provide support and to challenge progress across the school to ensure learners

continue to make progress with their attainment. The Head Teacher will continue to report to parents and carers through the Standards and Quality Report at the end of each session.