 **Education and Children’s Services**

STANDARDS & QUALITY REPORT AND IMPROVEMENT PLAN

**FOR**

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**LAST UPDATED: 18 May 2017**

**Aberdeenshire Council Education and Children’s Services**

“Education and Children’s Services works to improve the lives of children and young people, families and communities through the delivery of high quality services across Aberdeenshire”

Introduction: local and national context

This Standards and Quality Report and Improvement Plan is influenced by both Aberdeenshire and national priorities. These can be summarised as follows:

Aberdeenshire Priorities: these should be reflected in all areas of this document and the actions that emerge from it

* to develop excellence and equity;
* to embed the principles of GIRFEC (Getting it Right for Every Child);
* to provide support in developing inclusive, vibrant and healthy communities.

National Improvement Framework Priorities:

* Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy;
* Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children;
* Improvement in children and young people’s health and wellbeing; and
* Improvement in employability skills and sustained, positive school leaver destinations for all young people.

National Improvement Framework Drivers:

* School leadership
* Teacher professionalism
* Parental engagement
* Assessment of children’s progress
* School improvement
* Performance information

Additionally to support self-evaluation various quality indicators from the national evaluative framework How Good Is Our School?4 are referenced. Links to these sources are:

NIF- [www.gov.scot/Resource/0049/00491758.pdf](http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0049/00491758.pdf)

HGIOS?4 -[https://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/Images/HGIOS4August2016\_tcm4- 870533.pdf](https://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/Images/HGIOS4August2016_tcm4-%20%20870533.pdf)

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| 1. Context of the School  Echt School and Nursery is a small rural school situated on the outskirts of the village of Echt. It lies approximately 13 miles west of Aberdeen on the Aberdeen – Tarland road. The school has 2 classrooms, one of which accommodates Nursery and P1-4 with a shared space between the two classes which has direct access to outdoors, P5-7 classroom, a library and a school hall/gymnasium. The school is surrounded by a playground and has the added advantage of a large playing field within a close proximity. This playing field is used by the children during fine weather. We also are in the process of developing the school garden which lies adjacent to the school building. The children participate in a wide variety of curricular and non-curricular activities within the school grounds and also in their local environment and community. The children from the nursery attend Echt, Dunecht, Midmar and Cluny schools. The local academy is Alford, and most P7 children move here for their secondary education.  The teaching staff compromises of a staff equivalent of 2FTE, which includes a Head Teacher, a 0.55FTE teacher flexible days, 1FTE teacher, an EYLP and 3 EYPs. Echt has a 33 hour allocation of PSA support, this resource is carefully timetabled to support the needs of identified pupils and enhance learning. We currently have two specialist teachers for PE and ICT. The school aims were reviewed in 2015/2016 along with the creation of our Curriculum Rationale. The school has a very strong collegiate ethos which is well supported with an engaged parent forum and active Parent Council.  **Vision**  Inspired to learn together  Challenged to achieve our  Best in all we do.  **Aims**  **Challenging Learning Experiences**   1. To engage children and young people in the highest quality and challenging learning experiences   **A Caring Environment (Everyone Valued)**   1. To value and empower our staff, children and young people to promote well-being and respect   **An Ethos of Achievement**   1. To develop a culture of ambition and achievement which focuses on quality experiences and maximises success for all learners   **A Shared Vision**   1. To develop a shared vision for all by promoting fairness, justice and equality of opportunity, involving the whole school community in the life of the school   **Partnerships**     1. To work in partnership with parents, the community of Echt and other agencies in order to meet the needs of every child in Echt School   **Leadership**   1. To encourage a whole school approach to leadership. responsibility and decision making   **Outdoor Environment**   1. To promote the outdoor environment as a space for learning and encourage everyone to explore, appreciate and respect their world   **Values**  At Echt School we value:     * Fairness * Respect * Inspiration * Kindness * Creativity * Innovation * Responsibility * Positive Ethos * Learning Outdoors * Active Learning   Echt School Curriculum Rationale  <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UlCW3bsB1Vw> |

2. How good is our leadership and approach to improvement?

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| Relevant NIF priority: All  Relevant NIF driver(s): School leadership, Teacher professionalism, School improvement |
| Overview:  (narrative across this theme and various QI’s)  Staff work effectively as a team, there is a strong ethos of sharing practice and peer support. Staff, pupils, parents and partners are involved in improving the life and work of the school. There is a strong focus of improving learning within the staff. All staff have consistently high expectations of all learners. The updated vision of the school is ambitious and focuses on improvements in outcomes for all. All staff are actively involved in national guidelines for continuous improvement. The culture and ethos of our school is positive and focussed on the needs of all staff, partners and learners. Continual review and reflection of the use of resources, including digital technologies, supports effective and engaging learning.  Key strengths:   * Reviewed approaches to literacy across the school * Collaboration with other schools in Aberdeenshire through Emergent Literacy Parallel Project * Increased staff engagement in Professional Enquiry (Literacy)   Identified priorities for improvement:   * Review of school aims * Make vision, values and aims visible around school building |

In relation to the priorities listed above the following action plans have been confirmed:

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| Actions/Roles/Timings | Expected Outcomes/Impact on learners | How will success be measured? |
| Involve children, parents and staff in reviewing the aims of the school – Terms 1 and 2 | Children, parents and staff will be more aware of the aims of the school. | Children, staff and parents will be able to talk about the aims of the school in relation to learning. |
| Look into producing posters/banners/plaques to display inside and outside the building with vision, values and aims on them – Term 3 | Vision, values and aims will be more visible to everyone involved with the school. | Children, staff, parents and visitors to the school will be able to talk about the aims of the school. |
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| Evidence of progress/comments/identified next steps:  Date: Dec 2017 Revision of school aims held over to Term 3 when new HT will be in place  Date:  Date: | | |

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| Evaluation of QI 1.3 - Leadership Of Change:  Sources of evidence/evaluation activities undertaken:   * Vision, values and aims * Feedback from children and parents regarding review of vision, values and aims * Continual professional dialogue across all sectors * Evidence from parental consultation * Visitors to the school with an interest in our innovative practices   Overall evaluation of level of quality:  The school community have great ownership of the vision and values for the school. We would like them to also have ownership of the aims, which will be achieved by updating them next session. All children and parents were given the opportunity to engage with the process of reviewing the vision and values. This will be extended to them for the aims. All staff feel confident in bringing about change in the school, which impacts positively on the children’s learning. This is evaluated regularly and informs planning for future practice. Innovation and creative practice are the drivers for continuous improvement, underpinned by continuous self-evaluation and professional dialogue. We work hard to balance strategic planning for the school with an awareness of needs that arise and current research.  Level of quality for this QI: 5  ( HGIOS?4 1-6 scale) |

3. How good is the quality of care and education we offer?

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| Relevant NIF priority: All  Relevant NIF driver(s): Teacher professionalism, School leadership, Parental engagement, Assessment of children’s progress |
| Overview:  Child Protection and Safeguarding policies and procedures are regularly reviewed. The introduction of online chronology has ensured all staff share information confidentially, in a timely fashion. Staff have a clear understanding of their responsibilities in this area. The ethos and vision of the school strongly promotes equality, challenging all forms of discrimination. The curriculum takes account of learners’ entitlements and the four capacities and reflects the uniqueness of our setting. The learning environment is built on positive and nurturing relationships which lead to quality learning outcomes. Learners’ achievements in and out of school are recorded and celebrated. Learners play an active role in the school and are encouraged to take on leadership roles. Assessment approaches are being further developed to identify pupil attainment levels and next steps. A range of learning environments and creative teaching approaches are utilised across the school. Tasks, resources and activities are effectively differentiated and provide appropriate pace and challenge for all learners. There is a strong ethos across the school to minimize the impact of potential barriers to learning. Almost all the children and their parents are involved, participating, achieving and progressing well in their learning. Echt, Midmar, Dunecht and Cluny Schools have an enriched programme of learning experiences which support social relationships and transitions. The school understands and plays a significant role in the life of the local community.  Key strengths:   * All learners are encouraged to take an active role in the school, taking leadership responsibilities * A wider range of summative and formative assessment approaches are utilised to track pupil’s learning and identify next steps * Staff plan a wide range of stimulating and engaging learning experiences to promote curiosity, independence and confidence   Identified priorities for improvement:   * Working towards RRSA level 2, third Eco Green Flag and Fairtrade FairAchiever Award * Increased focus on mental health and wellbeing of all pupils as a cluster focus |

In relation to the priorities listed above the following action plans have been confirmed:

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| Actions/Roles/Timings | Expected Outcomes/Impact on learners | How will success be measured? | |
| Working towards RRSA level 2, third Eco Green Flag and FairAchiever Award – Term 1 onwards | Whole school community will be involved in work relating to all three awards. Cohesion between the work of the Pupil Groups will further develop. | Audits and action plans completed for all three awards – T2 | |
| Cluster mental health and wellbeing training for all staff – Term 1 onwards | All staff will have an increased understanding of how to use Mindfulness and Growth Mindset strategies to support pupils in their learning. Use in both classes of Bounce Back resource. | Feedback from staff and articulating changes in practice as a result of training and further reading. | |
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| Evidence of progress/comments/identified next steps:  Date: Dec 2017. Still trying to involve parents more in committee work even on a termly basis. All staff attended Mental Health and Wellbeing staff in-service in Nov and twilight in Sept. Parent workshop organised and led by GMHA attended by parents  Date:  Date: | | | |
| Evaluation of QI 2.3 - Learning, Teaching and Assessment:  Sources of evidence/evaluation activities undertaken:   * Feedback from parents regarding all forms of reporting * Collegiate professional dialogue focussed on assessment, tracking and monitoring * Development of tracking and monitoring spreadsheet * Continual evaluation and development of formative and summative assessment use across the school   Overall evaluation of level of quality:  Learners have access to a wide range of high-quality resources and equipment, including digital technologies. We make full use of our community and outdoor spaces to deliver high-quality outdoor learning. Almost all learners are highly motivated and engaged in all aspects of school life. The ethos of the school encourages all children to become independent learners and develop the four capacities. Skilled staff regularly plan and deliver learning experiences which are varied, differentiated, active and challenging for all children. Staff are aware of the need to communicate clearly the purpose of learning, and this is achieved most of the time. The principles of planning, observation, assessment, recording and reporting are integral to the work we do at Echt. These are fully embedded into everyday learning and teaching. Collegiate discussion is important to us, and we use this to moderate assessment across all areas of the curriculum. We have developed a school tracking and monitoring spreadsheet to collate assessment data and help identify development needs for individual learners. All pupils are engaged in self- and peer-assessment on a daily basis and understand how this benefits their learning.  Level of quality for this QI: 5  ( HGIOS?4 1-6 scale) | | | |

4. How good are we at improving outcomes for all our learners?

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| Relevant NIF priority: All  Relevant NIF driver(s): Assessment of children’s progress, School improvement, Performance information |
| Overview:  The school environment is nurturing and almost all pupils feel listened to, cared about and secure. We ensure inclusion and equality leads to improved outcomes for all learners. A developing tracking system combined with effective intervention ensures continuous progress for all learners. An extensive range of learning experiences and activities, in school, across the cluster and in the wider community, provide opportunities for all pupils to develop their skills and confidence. Learners continue to make very good progress across numeracy and literacy. Creativity and innovation are integral elements of our curriculum and are recognised across learning. Most learners are imaginative, open minded and able to appreciate issues from different perspectives.  Key strengths:   * Cluster collegiate working * Changes in our practice are firmly rooted in robust research and the impact is well documented * Assessment processes aid staff in identifying and addressing individual development needs * Improved InCAS assessment results for P3, 5 and 7   Identified priorities for improvement:   * Share Bounce Back work with parents and carers * Engage staff and pupils with the language of learning, and promote a ‘can do’ approach |

In relation to the priorities listed above the following action plans have been confirmed:

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| Actions/Roles/Timings | Expected Outcomes/Impact on learners | How will success be measured? |
| Learning characteristics – Term 1 | All stakeholders will have a common language when discussing learning | Revisit our baseline questions and activity to gather evidence of impact and change of culture |
| Bounce Back – all year | Both children and adults supported to develop a stronger sense of wellbeing and to be more resilient, confident and successful | Pupils will be able to articulate their feelings and be more aware of the feelings of others |
| Carol Dweck – Term 3  With support of EP, reading of ‘Mindset’ by C Dweck | Greater knowledge of research based findings behind Growth Mindset and the power of ‘Yet’ | Summary of discussion following collegiate meeting |
| Parental engagement session follow up, information provided – by Term 4 | Parents will have an understanding of the value of VL and how it underpins learning and enables them to support their child’s educational progress  Support parents for discussions with their child surrounding learning at home | Evaluation form completed by parents/carers  Pupil questionnaire surrounding the language used at home when discussing learning – to be carried out prior to engagement session and repeated in Term 4 |
| Evidence of progress/comments/identified next steps:  Date: Sept 2017 – still awaiting the arrival of the Bounce Back resource. Dec 2017 – resource now in use  Date:  Date: | | |
| Evaluation of QI 3.1 - Ensuring Wellbeing, Equity and Inclusion:  Sources of evidence/evaluation activities undertaken:   * Pupils are happy, confident and want to come to school. Absence levels are very low, pupils want to come to school. * High staff attendance rates and supportive, close relationships provide positive role models for pupils. * All staff demonstrate a knowledgeable and responsible attitude towards pupils and their needs. * Robust records to track any concerns which are then addressed with appropriate interventions. * Confident pupils who are identifying and driving forward change taking responsibility for the wider life of the school. * Pupils at the early stages of being able to talk about the wellbeing indicators and what they mean. * Pupils are aware of the importance of actively taking care of their environment.   Overall evaluation of level of quality:  Staff have an increased understanding of GIRFEC, the SHANAARI indicators and the UNCRC. All staff understand their responsibilities in supporting learners’ health and wellbeing very well. Our collegiate programme ensures that all staff engage in regular professional learning to ensure they are fully up to date with legislative framework and advice regarding wellbeing, equality and inclusion. We have created an environment where children feel secure in their ability to discuss their issues, and are sure that these will be handled sensitively. All children are given the opportunity to become a buddy or a Yellow Bander during their time at school. Everyone is encouraged to treat others with respect and consideration, and most children manage this. We have a very open relationship with families at the school, parents are encouraged to communicate matters regarding the wellbeing, equality and inclusion of their children. We ensure that opportunities for children are provided equally, to improve attainment for all. The curriculum provides well-planned and responsive opportunities to explore moral issues in a safe environment.  Level of quality for this QI: 5  ( HGIOS?4 1-6 scale)  Evaluation of QI 3.2 - Raising Attainment and Achievement:  Sources of evidence/evaluation activities undertaken:   * Pupils are engaged in their learning and highly motivated * Pupils requiring support are identified quickly and supported appropriately * Increased confidence in unfamiliar situations with a wider peer range * Feedback from the local community is always positive   Overall evaluation of level of quality:  Most children are achieving appropriate levels and a number are exceeding these. Raising attainment in literacy and numeracy are a central feature of the school’s priorities for improvement. Improved tracking of attainment over time has demonstrated good progress in all curriculum areas and at all stages. A range of assessment approaches are leading to improvements in attainment, and these are moderated with confident teacher judgement as well. Effective dialogue between ASN, Intervention Prevention teachers and all staff allows for continuous progress and appropriate intervention for all learners. All children are fully engaged in the learning process and are given the opportunity to make decisions about their learning. The children are regularly asked for feedback on their learning experiences and these views are taken into account and inform future planning. The children have plenty of opportunities to participate actively in their local community, such as attending Teeny Tiny Tots, Community Cafes and Community Litter Picks. Feedback from the community, regarding the children’s attitudes and capabilities is always extremely positive.  Level of quality for this QI: 5  (HGIOS?4 1-6 scale) | | | | |
| 5. What is our capacity for improvement?   * The overall capacity for improvement at Echt School is very good. This is based on the following aspects within the school:   - High levels of commitment and leadership by all staff  - Young people in the school who show a respect for and commitment to learning  - The positive ethos in the school underpinned by shared vision and values  - A high quality programme of professional learning that supports all staff and leads to improvements for learners  - Productive partnerships with parents, other schools and services and a range of contacts in the local community  - Positive feedback about the school from Local Authority officials, visitors, QIO, parents and learners themselves that gives confidence in what we do   * Aspects that could impact adversely on the capacity for further improvement include:   - Shortage of staffing hours (supply, McCrone, PSA)  - Changes to teaching staff | | | | |

6. Record of updating

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