



Glasgow City Council

Education, Skills and Early Years City Policy Committee

Report by Executive Director of Education Services

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### Inspections in Glasgow 2025/26

#### Purpose of Report:

To inform the committee of the evaluations and developments related to HMIE inspections for early years, primary, secondary and ASL establishments over the school session 2025-26

#### Recommendations:

The committee is asked to note the positive picture for inspections supported by a continual drive for improvement across the city.

Ward No(s):

Citywide: ✓

Local member(s) advised: Yes  No  consulted: Yes  No

#### PLEASE NOTE THE FOLLOWING:

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## 1 Background

- 1.1 The report on Glasgow schools and early years establishment inspections in June 2024 outlined how during the Covid pandemic, HMIE inspections were paused in Scottish schools. The Inspectors resumed visiting schools in February 2022 for 'recovery visits' and then in September 2022 they resumed their normal visits using quality indicators.
- 1.2 The purpose of HMIE Inspections is outlined by Education Scotland as: Inspection and review supports improvement and provides assurance on quality and improvement in Scottish education to promote the highest standards of learning leading to better outcomes for all learners.
- 1.3 Some schools have a short model inspection where two quality indicators were inspected:
- 2.3 Learning, Teaching and Assessment and
  - 3.2 Raising Attainment and Achievement.
- 1.4 Other schools have a full model inspection where as well as the two previous indicators, an additional two core quality indicators were inspected:
- 1.3 Leadership of Change
  - 3.1 Ensuring Wellbeing, Equality and Inclusion
- 1.5 These Quality Indicators (QIs) are from How Good is Our School version 4.

<b>Each school is attributed gradings based on the Inspectors findings and these are on a six-point scale as indicated below;</b>		
Excellent	means	Outstanding, sector-leading
Very Good	means	Major strengths
Good	means	Important strengths with some areas for improvement
Satisfactory	means	Strengths just outweigh weaknesses
Weak	means	Important weaknesses
Unsatisfactory	means	Major weaknesses

- 1.6 Sometimes schools can have examples of sector-leading practice within a quality indicator. They will have practice or initiative highlighted in the Summarised Inspection Findings (SIF) report.

## 2 OVERVIEW OF SCHOOL INSPECTIONS 2025-2026

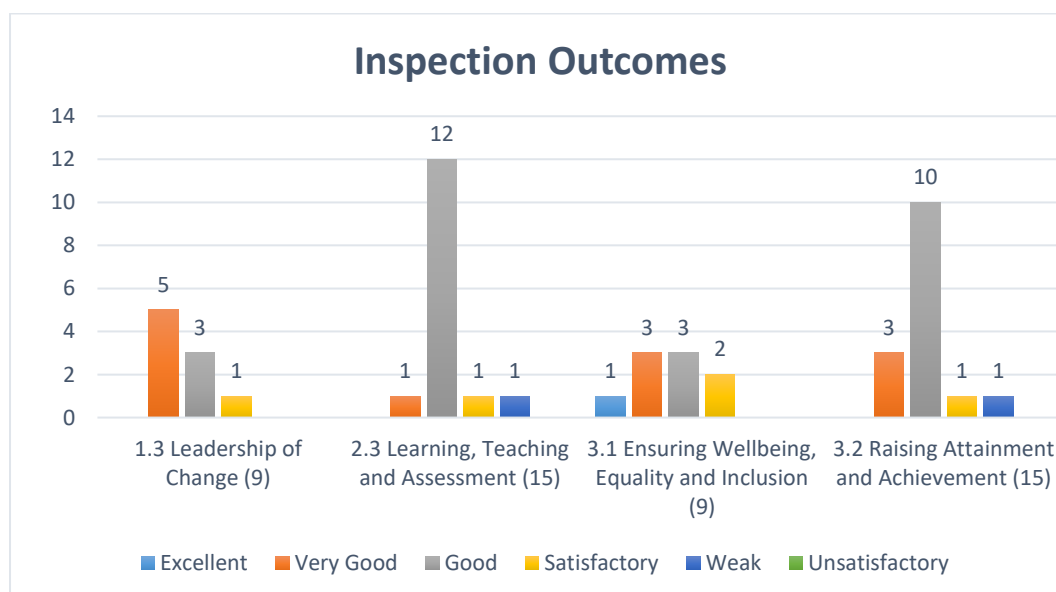
2.1 Since the start of this session there have been fifteen completed school inspections with published SIF reports, with another two still to be reported, and at time of writing, a further three inspections pending in May/June.

2.2 Of these fifteen completed inspections, nine have been primary schools, four have been secondary schools and two have been specialist provision.

2.3 Six schools have been inspected using the two indicator (short) model and nine schools have been inspected using the four indicator (full) model.

2.4 The overall grades are shown below:

Quality Indicator	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Satisfactory	Weak	Unsatisfactory
1.3 Leadership of Change (9)		5	3	1		
2.3 Learning, Teaching and Assessment (15)		1	12	1	1	
3.1 Ensuring Wellbeing, Equality, and Inclusion (9)	1	3	3	2		
3.2 Raising Attainment and Achievement (15)		3	10	1	1	



2.5 These outcomes continue the positive picture across our school inspections as seen across the last number of sessions, with most schools graded at 'Good' or above (Glasgow's benchmark) across all quality indicators.

### 3. **Excellent and Very Good Inspections**

- 3.1 In February 2026, St Monica's Primary School in the North East of the city, achieved an 'Excellent' grade for (3.1) Ensuring Wellbeing, Equality, and Inclusion as well as two 'Very Good' grades for (2.3) Learning, Teaching and Assessment and for (3.2) Raising Attainment and Achievement.

The comments in the report highlight the excellent practice in the school, including:

*The highly respected headteacher's approaches to developing leadership across the staff team. He has built a culture across the school where staff work very effectively together to ensure all children thrive at St Monica's Primary School.*

*Staff's outstanding approach to supporting children's wellbeing. The highly effective depute headteachers have supported staff to develop a deep understanding and impactful skillset to ensure children's inclusion. This is resulting in all children who receive high-quality and impactful targeted support making significant improvement in their attainment and wellbeing.*

*Children who are very welcoming, respectful and proud of their school. Staff at all levels have built a highly positive climate for learning. Children engage very well and are responsible learners. They are strong ambassadors for their school, sharing effective practice in children's rights to support improvement in other schools across Glasgow.*

*Teachers are highly skilled at questioning to extend children's learning. This is helping children to develop critical and independent thinking skills.*

*Staff's use of highly effective interventions to help children who require support to make accelerated progress in their learning. All children who have received targeted interventions over time are attaining very well in literacy and numeracy.*

*Senior leaders' and staff's relentless commitment to developing children's communication and language skills. Children engage thoughtfully in discussions and articulate their learning with confidence across the curriculum. They apply their literacy skills very well in leadership opportunities within and beyond their school.*

- 3.2 Additionally, In October 2025, King's Park Secondary School in the South of the city achieved two 'Very Good' grades for (1.3) Leadership of Change and for (3.1) Ensuring Wellbeing, Equality and Inclusion.

Again, the comments in the report highlight the very strong practice in the school:

*Senior leaders work effectively with staff to select appropriate improvement priorities and to manage the pace of change very well. They lead stakeholders in a*

*rigorous self-evaluation process to identify priorities for, and to measure the progress of, the school improvement plan (SIP).*

*The leadership of young people is a major strength of the school. There are many examples of young people acting as highly effective agents of change across their school community.*

*Staff facilitate a relevant, purposeful, and wide variety of leadership groups for young people, including Youth Parliament and diversity ambassadors. A majority of young people contribute significantly to identifying and leading improvement priorities through these groups. Young people evaluate learning and teaching purposefully in departments and across the school.*

*Senior leaders and staff adopt highly effective strategies to support and develop young people's sense of wellbeing. They foster clear and ambitious expectations of all young people through well-embedded routines and whole-school nurturing approaches. Almost all young people and their families feel very well supported by staff. Importantly, almost all young people have a strong sense of belonging to, and are proud of, their school community.*

*Young people are supported very well to understand how to lead a healthy lifestyle. They experience a range of purposeful and meaningful activities that develops their skills, resilience, and confidence.*

*Staff and young people organise very strong opportunities to celebrate the diversity of the school community regularly. This is through assemblies, often led by young people, on relevant themes, workshops, and a highly effective and dynamic photography project. Many of these events showcase the diverse range of art, music and culture found across the school. Young people speak very positively about these events and appreciate the chance to celebrate their rich cultural heritage.*

*Staff have a comprehensive knowledge and understanding of their statutory duties relating to wellbeing, equality, and inclusion. They demonstrate a strong and caring commitment to 'Getting it Right for Every Child.' Staff have effective procedures in place to identify, assess, and plan for young people who require additional support with their learning or wellbeing. All staff have benefited from positive professional learning to help them meet the needs of all learners. This underpins an inclusive and supportive learning environment.*

- 3.3 In December 2025, St Brigid's Primary School in the South of the city received 'Very Good' grades for (1.3) Leadership of Change, (2.3) Learning, Teaching and Assessment, and (3.1) Ensuring Wellbeing, Equality, and Inclusion.

Once more, the comments in the report highlight the very strong practice in the school:

*The acting headteacher's strategic leadership of the school is very effective. Through very skilful building of positive collaborative relationships, she ensures all staff share the long-established vision of continuous improvement and raised*

*attainment. Senior leaders work collegiately with all stakeholders to identify and agree appropriate and well considered priorities for improving the school. Senior leaders focus clearly on providing very extensive opportunities for wider achievement. This builds very effectively children's confidence, resilience, and character.*

*Leadership by children, for children across the school is very effective. Children speak very positively of their leadership roles and of how these roles support them to improve the school. For example, they are rightly very proud of their roles as 'ambassadors of change.' The Junior Leadership Team visit classes regularly to monitor progress of the school improvement priorities. They ensure children's views are represented well in the school's improvement journey. Children's rights underpin the work of children's leadership groups. Children explain passionately how their leadership work supports their right have their voice heard. This results in deep, meaningful change in school.*

*Children's learning experiences are supported by high-quality relationships and the positive school ethos. All children are polite, friendly and demonstrate care and respect towards each other, adults, and the wider community. They are very proud of their school. All staff know children very well. Their nurturing and inclusive approaches create a calm and purposeful learning environment. Senior leaders and staff use very well the agreed, well-considered learning and teaching guidance. This supports teachers very effectively to provide a consistent, structured approach to teaching and learning across the school.*

*In all lessons, teachers share clear instructions and direction with children. They support children very well to reflect on prior learning and understand their next steps. As a result, almost all children explain well what they are learning and what they need to do to be successful.*

*Almost all teachers use questioning very well to check children's understanding. Most teachers use skilfully children's responses to adapt their teaching to extend children's learning. They support children sensitively to build confidence in sharing their ideas and opinions.*

#### **4. OVERVIEW OF EARLY YEARS AND NURSERY CLASS INSPECTIONS APRIL 2025-APRIL 2026**

4.1 Early Learning & Childcare (ELC) services in Scotland are subject to inspection by 2 separate agencies – HMIE which inspects all nursery services providing funded ELC, and the Care Inspectorate which regulates all children's daycare services, not just those providing funded ELC, and which does not inspect schools, other than the care aspects of residential schools. HMIE and the Care Inspectorate may inspect nurseries separately or together and up until September 2025, each agency used its own inspection framework and quality indicators.

4.2 Between April and September 2025, inspectors visiting nurseries from Education Scotland, used the quality indicators in "How Good Is Our Early

*Learning & Childcare?*” to focus on the quality of children’s learning and achievement, especially the development of literacy and numeracy, and on the provision of health and wellbeing. There had been an increasing focus, however, on scrutiny of the breadth of the curriculum beyond these areas. Inspectors from the Care Inspectorate, graded nursery services on the quality of the care they provided with reference to the “*National Care Standards*” and their own “*Quality Framework for Daycare of Children, Childminding and School Aged Childcare.*”

- 4.3 In September 2025, a single shared Quality Improvement Framework (QIF) for the Early Learning & Childcare Sectors was implemented. This is now used by both agencies so that services are measured against the same criteria regardless of which agency is conducting the inspection and has significantly streamlined the number of quality indicators against which services must self-evaluate and are measured. Early evidence indicates that this approach is bringing greater consistency to inspection outcomes.
- 4.4 There have been 2 HMIE inspections of GCC early years provision and 1 HMIE inspection of a Funded Provider nursery during the inspection year April 2024 to April 2025.
- 4.5 Both of the inspections of GCC provision were conducted under the new shared QIF, with one being a standalone nursery (joint inspection) and the other a nursery class (HMIE only) which is part of a primary school. The inspection of the Funded Provider service took place using the former inspection framework (joint inspection).
- 4.6 Additionally, during the same period there were 17 Care Inspectorate inspections of GCC nurseries under the old framework (April to September 2025) and 23 under the new QIF (September 25 to April 2026). In our Funded Provider nurseries during the same period, there were 24 Care Inspectorate inspections under the old framework and 15 under the new QIF.

Inspections by either agency do not always consider all of the quality indicators within the framework.

- 4.7 For the 2 GCC operated nurseries both inspected by HMIE under the new QIF, gradings were predominantly good, except for one of the nurseries being graded as satisfactory in 2 areas. This means that in those areas, strengths just outweigh weaknesses, and the setting needs to build on those strengths to improve practice. They are being supported to do so by the ELC Quality Improvement Team.
- 4.8 Those GCC services inspected by the Care Inspectorate under the old framework, 58.8% were graded as very good, which was an improvement on the previous inspection year when 54% of those inspected were graded as very good. The remainder were all graded as good, with none falling below the required National Standard.

- 4.9 Under the new QIF, 12.5% were graded as excellent in two inspection areas, 29.1% as very good, 45.8% as good and 12.5% as adequate. Of those grading as adequate for each of these, it was in one inspection area only with all other areas achieving good or very good.
- 4.10 The Funded Provider nursery inspected by HMIE under the old framework was graded as satisfactory in each of the areas considered.
- 4.11 For those Funded Providers inspected by the Care Inspectorate under the old framework, outcomes were mixed with 58.3% graded as good, 16.6% as very good, 20.8% as adequate and 4.1% as weak. These outcomes were poorer than the previous year when 81% were graded good or above with 26% of those being very good.
- 4.12 Under the new QIF, 6.6% graded excellent in at least one area, 20% as very good, 40% as good and 33.3% as adequate. Of those grading as adequate for two of these it was in one inspection area and for the others the adequate grading applied to two inspection areas with all other areas achieving good.
- 4.13 Again, regardless of which inspection framework was applied, those grading at adequate are being supported to improve.

4.14 The breakdown of grades for inspections is as follows:

#### **HMIE GRADES – GCC NURSERIES**

Leadership	Curriculum	Learning, Teaching & Assessment	NCS	Wellbeing, Inclusion and Equality	Securing Children's Progress
(Care Insp SSKV) - 4		3	4		3
	4	4		4	

#### **HMIE GRADES – FUNDED PROVIDER NURSERIES**

Leadership of Change – 1.3	Learning, Teaching & Assessment – 2.3	Ensuring Wellbeing, Equity & Inclusion – 3.1	Securing Children's Progress – 3.2
	3		3

Key: LMSR – Leadership and Management of Staff and Resources  
 CTDHQS – Children Thrive and Develop in Quality Space  
 CPL – Children Play and Learn  
 CSA – Children are Supported to Achiev

**GCC Nurseries:**

Numbers		CI OLD FRAMEWORK				CI - NEW FRAMEWORK			
GRADE	Q.I.	1.1 1.3 CPL	2.2 Setting	3.1 Leadership	4.3 Staffing	Leadership LMSR	CTDHQS HQS	CPL PLD	CSA NCS
	LOCAL AUTHORITY	6	0	0	0	0	3	0	2
5		10	9	9	9	12	0	8	13
4		7	8	8	8	6	0	13	10
3		0	0	0	0	2	1	0	1
2		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>INSPECTION TOTALS</b>		<b>17</b>				<b>23</b>			

Percentage		CI OLD FRAMEWORK				CI - NEW FRAMEWORK			
GRADE	Q.I.	1.1 1.3 CPL	2.2 Setting	3.1 Leadership	4.3 Staffing	Leadership LMSR	CTDHQS HQS	CPL PLD	CSA NCS
	Local Authority	6	0%	0%	0%	0%	13%	0%	9%
5		59%	53%	53%	53%	52%	0%	35%	57%
4		41%	47%	47%	47%	26%	0%	57%	43%
3		0%	0%	0%	0%	9%	4%	0%	4%
2		0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
1		0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
<b>INSPECTION TOTALS</b>		<b>17</b>				<b>23</b>			

## Funded Provider Nurseries:

Numbers		CI OLD FRAMEWORK				CI - NEW FRAMEWORK			
GRADE	Q.I.	1.1 1.3 CPL	2.2 Setting	3.1 Leadership	4.3 Staffing	Leadership LMSR	CTDHQS HQS	CPL PLD	CSA NCS
	FUNDED PROVIDERS	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
5		7	4	7	4	4	0	2	4
4		12	15	11	7	7	0	12	8
3		4	3	5	4	4	2	0	3
2		1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
1		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
INSPECTION TOTALS		24				15			

Percentage		CI OLD FRAMEWORK				CI - NEW FRAMEWORK			
GRADE	Q.I.	1.1 1.3 CPL	2.2 Setting	3.1 Leadership	4.3 Staffing	Leadership LMSR	CTDHQS HQS	CPL PLD	CSA NCS
	FUNDED PROVIDERS	6	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	7%
5		29%	17%	29%	17%	27%	0%	13%	27%
4		50%	63%	46%	29%	47%	0%	80%	53%
3		17%	13%	21%	17%	27%	13%	0%	20%
2		4%	4%	4%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
1		0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
INSPECTION TOTALS		24				15			

## 5. Summary

- 5.1 Overall, there is clearly a very positive and sustained picture of improvement in relation to inspections across Glasgow. The drive through All Learners All Achieving to support all aspects of our work in schools and early years

establishments and promote a culture of continuous improvement is evidenced in our inspection evaluations. We will continue to support schools and early years establishments to achieve the best possible outcomes for our children and young people and appreciate the efforts of all our staff to secure this.

## 6. Policy and Resource Implications

### Resource Implications:

<i>Financial:</i>	Education Services Budget
<i>Legal:</i>	N/A
<i>Personnel:</i>	Education Services Staff
<i>Procurement:</i>	N/A

### Council Strategic Plan:

Grand Challenge 2 – Increase opportunity and prosperity for all our citizens.

Mission 3: Raise attainment amongst Glasgow's children and young people

### Equality and Socio-Economic Impacts:

*Does the proposal support the council's Equality Outcomes 2025-2029. Please Specify.*

Outcome 10: Glasgow City Council (Education Services) has continued to improve the engagement, participation and inclusion of all children and young people in order to support the attainment, achievement and wellbeing of all, including those experiencing socio-economic disadvantage, English Additional Language learners, those who identify as black and minority ethnic, LGBT and ASN.

*What are the potential equality impacts as a result of this report?*

Inspections are about support and accountability. The results which have been highlighted show that our early years establishments and schools continue to have a positive impact on many children and families across the city.

*Please highlight if the policy/proposal will help address socio-economic disadvantage.*

The report highlights that the service early years and schools provide will help our city to challenge socio-economic

disadvantage by continuing to focus on improving experiences and outcomes for our children and families.

**Climate Impacts:**

*Does the proposal support any Climate Plan actions? Please specify:* Not specifically.

*What are the potential climate impacts as a result of this proposal?* None (except for work on-going in early years establishments and schools)

*Will the proposal contribute to Glasgow's net zero carbon target?* No

**Privacy and Data Protection Impacts:**

Are there any potential data protection impacts as a result of this report Y/N No

**7. Recommendations:**

The committee is asked to note the positive picture for inspections supported by a continual drive for improvement across the city.