

South Ayrshire Council

**Report by Depute Chief Executive and Director of Education
to Cabinet
of 17 June 2025**

**Subject: Inspection of Doonfoot Primary School and Early Years
Centre: Education Scotland Report**

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform the Cabinet of the outcome of the Education Scotland Inspection of Doonfoot Primary School and Early Years Centre.

2. Recommendation

2.1 It is recommended that the Cabinet:

2.1.1 considers the contents of the National report by Education Scotland as contained in [Appendix 1](#); and

2.1.2 agrees that the main points for action will be addressed by the Headteacher and Quality Improvement Manager.

3. Background

- 3.1 Education Scotland inspectors inspected the school and early years centre in February 2025 and looked at some particular aspects of the school's recent work. The inspection was carried out using the full inspection model. This involves inspectors evaluating leadership of change; learning, teaching and assessment; curriculum (learning pathways); partnerships (impact on learners/ parental engagement); safeguarding; wellbeing, equality and inclusion; and raising attainment and achievement within the school and securing children's progress in the early years centre.

- 3.2 The report for Doonfoot Primary School and Early Years Centre was published on 29 April 2025.

- 3.3 The inspection of Doonfoot Primary School and Early Years Centre found the following key strengths:

- The positive, inclusive and caring ethos that is a strong feature across the school community. This results in confident, respectful and happy children who feel included and proud of their school and setting. Children demonstrate the school values in everyday actions and develop their leadership skills very well through a wide variety of successful groups, clubs and committees.

- The strong and caring leadership of the headteacher. She has identified accurately key priorities, empowers the whole school community and is managing the pace of change very well. The headteacher is aspirational for all children and has a clear, ambitious vision for the school.
- Staff who make very effective use of the local community, partnerships and real-life contexts for learning. This supports children to be motivated and included in the school's vision, 'education without walls'.
- The highly effective teamwork and leadership amongst staff across the school community. All staff are keen to develop their individual and collective skills and knowledge to help improve children's experiences.
- The leadership of the depute manager in the Early Years Centre and the work of the skilled practitioners. This is ensuring children in the EYC experience high-quality early learning and childcare and make very effective progress with their learning.

3.4 Education Scotland Inspectors agreed the following key points for action with the leadership team of the school and educational services:

- Staff should continue to ensure learning and teaching is at the correct pace and set at the right level of difficulty. Staff should continue to extend children's engagement and independence in their learning.
- Senior leaders and staff should raise attainment further for all children across all subject areas. They should ensure children make better progress and build effectively on what they already know.

3.5 The Headteacher of Doonfoot Primary School and Early Years Centre will link with the Quality Improvement Manager to build on the strengths identified in the inspection report and address the key points for action.

4. Proposals

4.1 It is proposed that the Cabinet notes the key strengths and points for action in the Education Scotland report and agrees to the Headteacher addressing these in conjunction with the Quality Improvement Manager.

4.2 Given the positive nature of the report there will be no further visits by Education Scotland in relation to this inspection.

5. Legal and Procurement Implications

5.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

5.2 There are no procurement implications arising from this report.

6. Financial Implications

6.1 Not applicable.

7. Human Resources Implications

7.1 Not applicable.

8. Risk

8.1 *Risk Implications of Adopting the Recommendations*

8.1.1 There are no risks associated with adopting the recommendations.

8.2 *Risk Implications of Rejecting the Recommendations*

8.2.1 Educational Services may be downgraded as part of the Shared Risk Assessment process carried out by the Local Area Network responsible for scrutiny if the service does not address the main points for action.

9. Integrated Impact Assessment (incorporating Equalities)

9.1 The report does not involve proposals for policies, strategies, procedures, processes, financial decisions and activities (including service delivery), both new and at review, that affect the Council's communities and employees, therefore an Integrated Impact Assessment is not required.

10. Sustainable Development Implications

10.1 ***Considering Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)*** - This report does not propose or seek approval for a plan, policy, programme or strategy or document otherwise described which could be considered to constitute a plan, programme, policy or strategy.

11. Options Appraisal

11.1 An options appraisal has not been carried out in relation to the subject matter of this report.

12. Link to Council Plan

12.1 The matters referred to in this report contribute to Priority Two of the Council Plan: Live, Work, Learn and Outcome One: Education and lifelong learning.

13. Link to Shaping Our Future Council Yes No

13.1 Not applicable.

14. Results of Consultation

14.1 There has been no public consultation on the contents of this paper.

14.2 Consultation has taken place with Councillor William Grant, Portfolio Holder for Education, and the contents of this report reflect any feedback provided.

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15. Next Steps for Decision Tracking

- 15.1 If the recommendations above are approved by Members, the Depute Chief Executive and Director of Education will ensure that all necessary steps are taken to ensure full implementation of the decision within the following timescales, with the completion status reported to the Cabinet in the 'Council and Cabinet Decision Log' at each of its meetings until such time as the decision is fully implemented:

Implementation	Due date	Managed by
Meeting to be arranged with the Headteacher to agree a plan to address the action points contained in the report and monitor progress in conjunction with the planned programme of visits	June 2026	Quality Improvement Manager

Background Papers None

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Date: **4 June 2025**



29 April 2025

Dear Parent/Carer

In February 2025, a team of inspectors from Education Scotland visited Doonfoot Primary School and Early Years Centre (EYC). During our visit, we talked to parents/carers and children and worked closely with the headteacher and staff.

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

- The positive, inclusive and caring ethos that is a strong feature across the whole school community. This results in confident, respectful and happy children who feel included and proud of their school and setting. Children demonstrate the school values in everyday actions and develop their leadership skills very well through a wide variety of successful groups, clubs and committees.
- The strong and caring leadership of the headteacher. She has identified accurately key priorities, empowers the whole school community and is managing the pace of change very well. The headteacher is aspirational for all children and has a clear, ambitious vision for the school.
- Staff who make very effective use of the local community, partnerships and real-life contexts for learning. This supports children to be motivated and included in the school's vision, 'education without walls'.
- The highly effective teamwork and leadership amongst staff across the school community. All staff are keen to develop their individual and collective skills and knowledge to help improve children's experiences.
- The leadership of the depute manager in the Early Years Centre and the work of the skilled practitioners. This is ensuring children in the EYC experience high-quality early learning and childcare and make very effective progress with their learning.

The following areas for improvement were identified and discussed with the headteacher and a representative from South Ayrshire Council.

- Staff should continue to ensure learning and teaching is at the correct pace and set at the right level of difficulty. Staff should continue to extend children's engagement and independence in their learning.
- Senior leaders and staff should raise attainment further for all children across all subject areas. They should ensure children make better progress and build effectively on what they already know.

We gathered evidence to enable us to evaluate the school's work using four quality indicators from [How good is our school \(4th edition\)](#) and [How good is our early learning and childcare?](#). Quality indicators help schools, local authorities and inspectors to judge what is working well and what needs to be improved. Following the inspection of each school, the Scottish Government gathers details of our evaluations to keep track of how well Scottish schools are doing.

Here are Education Scotland's evaluations for Doonfoot Primary School and Early Years Centre

Quality indicators for the primary stages	Evaluation
Leadership of change	very good
Learning, teaching and assessment	good
Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion	very good
Raising attainment and achievement	good
Descriptions of the evaluations are available from: How good is our school? (4th edition), Appendix 3: The six-point scale	

Quality indicators for the Early Years Centre	Evaluation
Leadership of change	very good
Learning, teaching and assessment	very good
Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion	very good
Securing children's progress	very good
Descriptions of the evaluations are available from: How good is our early learning and childcare? Appendix 1: The six-point scale	

A more detailed document called Summarised Inspection Findings (SIF) will be available on the Education Scotland website at: [Doonfoot Primary School | Inspection Report | Education Scotland](#)

What happens next?

We are confident that the school has the capacity to continue to improve and so we will make no more visits in connection with this inspection. South Ayrshire Council will inform parents/carers about the school's progress as part of its arrangements for reporting on the quality of its schools.

Louise Phillips
HM Inspector