

Praise for school once condemned for making lessons 'too easy'

A primary school where pupils complained lessons were not hard enough has been praised for making improvements over the last year.

A report on Sacred Heart RC Primary School, in Penicuik, said staff had worked hard to meet children's needs in the classroom including setting up pupil voice groups where they could have their say.

And inspectors said they would not need to return to the school in connection with issues raised in the past.

Education inspectors had given the school a weak rating after they said nearly half of pupils they spoke to said lessons were not hard enough and criticised the standard of teaching.

The Education Scotland report said: "In almost all classes, teachers need to improve the quality of teaching to ensure children experience motivating learning and make progress in line with national standards

"About a third of children in the questionnaires say teachers don't ask them very often about what they want to learn. Almost half of children say their learning is not hard enough."

A report to Midlothian Council's policy, performance and scrutiny committee today heard that a year on inspectors had

increased the grades to good and praised work carried out by the acting headteacher and staff.

The report said the introduction of pupil voice groups in particular had been welcomed with inspectors saying: "This is enhancing children's opportunities to be active participants in the school and share their views.

"Senior leaders and staff have reviewed and refreshed the school's learning, teaching and assessment policy. They have made considerable improvements to the planning of learning, teaching and assessment which is helping to improve the quality of teaching."

Councillor Debbi McCall welcomed the improved report saying she did not recognise the school she knew from the original inspection findings.

She said: "The previous report did not reflect the school I know so it is really pleasing to see this which is down to the work of the acting headteacher and staff.

"It is awful when you have a report of this kind hanging over you and in my opinion it was not deserved at all."

The committee welcomed the latest report and sent their thanks to the staff at the school for their work.

By Marie Sharp Local Democracy Reporter