

21 May 2013

Dear Parent/Carer

**Breadalbane Academy and Nursery Class
Perth and Kinross Council**

Recently, as you may know, my colleagues and I inspected your child's school. During our visit, we talked to parents, children and young people and worked closely with the headteacher and staff. We wanted to find out how well children and young people are learning and achieving and how well the school supports children and young people to do their best. The headteacher shared with us the school's successes and priorities for improvement. We looked at some particular aspects of the school's recent work, including leadership for learning, the work of staff in the nursery in building relationships with parents and carers, and the S4 mentoring programme. As a result, we were able to find out how good the school is at improving children's and young people's education.

How well do children and young people learn and achieve?

Across the nursery and school, children and young people are well-behaved and respectful. They enjoy learning in a positive environment. In the nursery class, children are settled in their surroundings and are enthusiastic and keen to learn. They can talk about what they have learned and understand what they need to do to get better. Across the school and nurture bases, children and young people are motivated and are developing independent learning skills. They talk confidently about what they are learning and work successfully in pairs, groups and individually to complete tasks. In most lessons children and young people receive very helpful feedback about their progress and are clear about what they have to do to improve. All young people benefit from applying their learning in a broad range of settings both in and out of school. For example, they surveyed the local community on issues related to Fairtrade and litter. Young people feel safe on the campus and appreciate the high level of support provided by a wide range of staff. Children and young people enhance their leadership, interpersonal and organisational skills by taking part in many lunchtime, after-school and community based activities. They undertake a range of volunteering activities, for example, the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme and their contributions are recognised at the annual local authority Spirit of Youth award ceremony. The school's ceilidh bands have performed at a variety of local and international events and have raised funds for various causes.

In the nursery and across the school, children and young people are achieving well. In the nursery class, children are developing their interest in books and are improving

talking and listening skills when sharing their news. Children and young people understand the importance of having a healthy lifestyle. Across the school, they are developing their literacy and numeracy skills well. Children and young people use their literacy skills regularly across a range of curricular areas. Teachers should now extend opportunities for children and young people to use their numeracy skills across all areas of learning. In the newly established Gaelic medium provision children are progressing very well. Children and young people who need additional help in their learning are making very good progress towards achieving their targets. At S1 to S3, young people are making suitable progress across their broad general education. At S4 to S6, performance in national examinations has generally shown an improving trend. The well-supported mentoring programme has had a significant impact on raising attainment at S4. Overall, the school is successful in sending young people to positive post school destinations.

How well does the school support children and young people to develop and learn?

The school provides very effective support to children and young people to help them learn. In the nursery, resources are well matched to the needs of most children. At times, the pace of sessions could be increased to provide more challenge, particularly for higher attaining children. Across the school and nurture bases, teachers and support staff use a variety of effective learning and teaching approaches to meet the learning needs of children and young people. The school identifies and prioritises support very well for learners with additional support needs. Pastoral care is of a high standard and staff work very well to engage and support children and young people with a diverse range of needs. The school works effectively with partners such as the school nurse and educational psychologist to deliver positive outcomes for children and young people. The school has a very strong caring and inclusive ethos.

Staff are developing a curriculum which aims to build young people's confidence and skills and enable them to contribute effectively to society. Most staff are making good use of Curriculum for Excellence advice to plan learning. A range of successful developments are in place to promote literacy across learning. Children and young people across the nursery and school have opportunities to learn Gaelic. The school now needs to continue to increase opportunities for learning through the medium of Gaelic especially in the nursery. The school's approach to developing the curriculum encourages staff to engage with all aspects of Curriculum for Excellence. For example, children's experiences in science were enhanced through a radio link to the International Space Station. There are a number of effective and innovative volunteer-led community projects which support the curriculum. The curriculum is also enhanced by well-developed links to businesses and partners in the community. We have asked the school to continue its work to ensure that all children and young people are challenged in their learning and make appropriate progress. In particular staff need to develop further their arrangements for providing young people in S3 with continuity in learning to help them achieve success in qualifications. In further developing the curriculum staff should increase the involvement of stakeholders, including parents. There are very good arrangements in place to support children and young people as they move between stages in their learning. This includes enhanced support for vulnerable children and young people.

How well does the school improve the quality of its work?

Across the campus, staff are reflective as individuals, keen to develop professionally and to improve learning experiences for children and young people. Staff in the nursery have developed initiatives to help parents and carers support their children's learning. Staff across the campus share regularly their expertise in order to improve their practice. Staff now need to use assessment information more effectively to track progress in children's and young people's learning as the curriculum develops. The headteacher provides strong and effective leadership. This has resulted in improved learning experiences and achievements for children and young people. The deputy headteachers support the headteacher very well and along with principal teachers, are contributing well to the development of the curriculum, learning and teaching. Parents would like the school to continue to develop the ways in which it communicates with them. Children and young people have suitable opportunities to give their views, for example, at the pupil council and through questionnaires. The school should develop the extent to which these discussions focus on improving learners' experiences.

This inspection of your school and nursery class found the following key strengths.

- Confident children and young people who are enthusiastic about their learning and benefit from very positive relationships with staff.
- Caring and inclusive ethos which helps children and young people to achieve their best.
- High-quality learning experiences which are enhanced by contributions from business partners and members of the community.
- Reflective staff who work together well and take on leadership roles in order to develop the learning community.
- The leadership of the headteacher, ably supported by the senior management team who ensure that strong values of achievement and support for all permeate the campus.

We discussed with staff and the education authority how they might continue to improve the school and nursery class. This is what we agreed with them.

- Further develop approaches to tracking and monitoring in order to ensure continuity and challenge across learning.
- Continue to develop the curriculum including progression in young people's learning from S4 to S6.

What happens at the end of the inspection?

We are satisfied with the overall quality of provision. We are confident that the school's self-evaluation processes are leading to improvements. As a result, we will make no further visits in connection with this inspection. The local authority will inform parents about the school's progress as part of the authority's arrangements for reporting to parents on the quality of its schools.

Jacqueline Horsburgh
HM Inspector

Additional inspection evidence, such as details of the quality indicator evaluations, for your school can be found on the Education Scotland website at <http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/inspectionandreview/reports/school/primsec/BreadalbaneAcademyPerthandKinross.asp>.

If you would like to receive this letter in a different format, for example, in a translation please contact the administration team on the above telephone number.

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