

26 August 2014

Dear Parent/Carer

**Fossoway Primary School and Nursery Class
Perth and Kinross Council**

In June 2013, HM Inspectors published a letter on your child's school. Recently, as you may know, we visited the school again. During our visit, we talked to children and worked closely with the headteacher and staff. We heard from the headteacher and other staff how the school has continued to improve. We looked at particular areas that had been identified in the original inspection and at other aspects of the school's work, as proposed by the headteacher. As a result, we were able to find out how well children are now learning and achieving and how the school is continuing to support them to do their best. This letter sets out what we found.

How well do children learn and achieve?

Across the school and the nursery class, there has been significant progress in improving learning for children. Teachers now provide rich learning experiences for almost all children across the school. Nursery children benefit from their involvement in using mind maps and floor books to plan and assess their own learning. The learning environment is stimulating and inspires creativity. Children enjoy the challenges set by staff through play activities indoors and outdoors. Children are articulate and confident and used these skills to good effect when acting in the Jack and the Beanstalk play. Across the school, children now take pride in their positive attitudes to learning. They talk articulately about their involvement in planning their learning and the skills they are developing. Almost all children say they enjoy learning and that the school helps them to be more confident. Teaching approaches have greatly improved and children are benefiting from being involved more in setting criteria for their success. They take pride in sharing their learning with parents through their 'Learning Steps' jotters. Outdoor learning is developing well in the nursery and staff now plan to develop it further for all children in the school.

At the early primary stages and in the nursery class, children are making very good progress in their learning. The standard of children's writing and numeracy in P1/2 is high. Across the school, the pace of learning and level of challenge have greatly improved which has led to better progress in literacy and numeracy overall. The school has plans to ensure that the successful learning and high standards achieved, particularly in the early stages, are sustained. Many children participate in several committees and are now more fully involved in leading the work of the school. They are proud of their school and achievements and benefit from many opportunities to share and celebrate their successes. Through their involvement in

committees, children have improved their knowledge and understanding of healthy lifestyles and the importance of good behaviour. Overall, the children are confident, very well behaved, polite and courteous.

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

Staff now place a clear emphasis on high expectations for children's learning. Teachers have improved their approaches to curriculum planning. Teachers plan whole-school topics and activities in a creative and flexible way, involving children and partners to make meaningful contexts for learning. A good example of this was the recent whole-school study of China which offered opportunities for children to apply their skills in literacy and expressive arts. Tasks and activities now meet the needs of almost all groups and individuals well. Staff work well together to support and challenge children in their learning. The support for learning teacher provides helpful guidance to staff and parents. As a result, support for learning in class is now more effective and well-targeted. Support for learning assistants are confident in their role and children's progress in literacy has improved through the introduction of Wave Three reading materials. Very effective transition arrangements are now in place from nursery to P1 and from stage to stage. Partnership with Kinross High School is strong and could be strengthened further through links with neighbouring primary schools and continued collaboration between primary and secondary teachers.

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

The new headteacher has had a significant impact on the work of the school. She has ensured that the school now has effective processes to bring about improvements. Since her appointment, the school has raised expectations in all aspects of its work. In particular, she has gained the confidence and respect of all staff and parents. Staff appreciate the guidance and support of the headteacher. She gives them opportunities to lead school initiatives and supports their professional development. As a result, staff are developing confidence in what they want children to achieve through the curriculum. The appropriate focus given to high standards and consistent approaches in learning and teaching has led to children making better progress, behaving more responsibly and enjoying having a greater involvement in their school. Children are benefiting from the vibrant environment and improved links with parents. All parents say that, overall, they are happy with the school and its leadership. The commitment of the headteacher and staff to working in partnership with parents has improved the ethos of the school which is now very positive. The headteacher has managed the pace of change very well and has clear ambition for the children of Fossoway. The supportive Parent Council and wider parent forum, together with staff and partners in the community, give us confidence that the school will continue to improve.

What happens next?

The school is now well-placed to continue to deliver high quality education. As a result, we will make no further visits in connection with this inspection. As part of its arrangements for reporting to parents on the quality of education, Perth and Kinross Council will provide a further update to parents by June 2015.

Susan Gow
HM Inspector

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