

1 March 2016

Dear Parent/Carer

**Errol Primary School 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 and children and worked closely with the headteacher and staff. We wanted to find out how well children are learning and achieving and how well the school supports children 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 the visual curriculum, assessment for learning approaches and procedures to meet learners' needs. As a result, we were able to find out how good the school is at improving children's education.

How well do children learn and achieve?

Across the nursery class and the primary stages, children learn well. They are happy and keen to learn. They respond well to positive, respectful relationships with staff. In the nursery class, almost all children are motivated and enthusiastic about their learning. Children are confident, independent and move between activities with ease. Staff listen very well to children and take very good account of their views. For example, children's ideas are used to develop a toy shop and to identify areas of interest for the outdoor learning space. Floor books are well used to record children's ideas and to help children reflect on what they want to learn and how they might do this. Across the primary stages, most children are motivated and keen to take part in a range of learning activities. Children show good levels of interest, particularly in relation to topic work such as bridges, Vikings and the Blitz. Children respond well to opportunities to make decisions about what they are learning. They are developing skills to reflect on their learning through use of their learning logs. We have asked the school to develop further this work to better support children to identify and review their own targets and next steps. The school should continue as planned to develop teaching and learning approaches in order to further improve children's motivation and engagement. Children contribute to the life of the school through undertaking a range of roles. For example, the house captains recently supported a house group discussion which led to the creation of the new school values. Children's achievements are recognised and celebrated. The school now needs to develop more robust approaches to track and monitor children's wider achievements to help them to be more aware of the skills they gain through learning activities.

In the nursery almost all children are developing and applying their early literacy and language skills very well. They communicate confidently and listen well in group

situations. They have a good understanding of early writing skills and enjoy spending time looking at books and having stories read to them. Most children in the nursery are developing their early numeracy and mathematics skills well. For example, children are developing their counting skills when involved in gym activities. Children regularly make effective use of the outdoor area to extend their learning. Across the primary stages, children are making good progress in their learning in literacy and English and numeracy and mathematics. Children enjoy reading and are benefitting from the substantial increase of reading materials across the school. They are able to discuss their favourite authors and identify features of different types of books. Children can write for a range of purposes. For example, writing reports about climate change, diary entries and letters to the 'man on the moon'. The school has identified that writing is a priority for improvement. We have discussed with the school ways of supporting children to develop skills to better analyse and evaluate texts. Overall children listen well to staff and to each other and are improving their discussion skills. Across the school children are developing a good understanding of numeracy and mathematics. For example, they demonstrate good knowledge of multiplication facts and can apply this to solve simple problems. We have asked the school to increase opportunities for children to apply their knowledge to solve increasingly more complex problems. Across the school, children are developing confidence in applying their skills to other areas of the curriculum such as creating a bar chart with collected data and understanding profit and loss through their enterprise project with Glendoick Garden Centre. Across the school, children are developing their skills in physical education and have good knowledge about the need for a balanced diet and regular physical exercise.

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

Overall, the school provides appropriate support for children to develop and learn. In the nursery class, staff know their children well, observe children in their play and use this knowledge to provide well matched learning activities. Staff are developing their abilities in identifying and recording next steps in learning for individual children. We have asked them to continue to identify ways of involving children and parents in planning these next steps. Across the school, most tasks and activities are appropriately matched to the needs of the majority of children. Staff have a good understanding of the strengths and abilities of children. Teachers should now make better use of this information to plan opportunities that meet the needs of all learners and ensure there is a sufficient level of challenge for all children. Appropriate processes are in place to help teachers identify the needs of children who require additional support with their learning. Senior managers should continue to work in collaboration with partners and support for learning staff to identify the most effective ways of meeting these needs within the classroom.

In the nursery class, the curriculum is clearly based on play and children's interests. Across the nursery class and primary stages, children are experiencing a broad and balanced curriculum. Good account is taken of national advice and this has been used to develop and continuously review the 'visual curriculum'. This is helping staff to better plan learning across a range of experiences for children within the classroom, school and wider community. For example, children are learning about the importance of orchards in the local area and using this learning to look after the trees in their school garden. The school works well with partners to develop children's

understanding of their local area. For example, working with the Tay Landscape Partnership, children learned about the importance of clay houses in the area and took part in the 'Clayfest' festival. In mathematics and English, programmes of work ensure effective progression in children's learning from stage to stage. We have asked staff in the nursery and school to plan more effectively together to ensure children continue to build on their strengths as they move into Primary 1 and progress their learning as well as possible. The very well planned science curriculum enables children to progressively develop core knowledge and skills of investigation. The school has a number of partnerships to support the health and wellbeing curriculum and as a result, children are able to apply what they are learning in meaningful contexts.

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

The headteacher has a clear vision and is committed to continuously improving the school. He has recognised key areas for improvement and has led the school effectively towards achieving a number of planned priorities. He has encouraged a collegiate approach to evaluating the work of the school and as a result, staff now work effectively together as a team to bring about improvements. A number of staff undertake leadership roles and they speak positively about the opportunities they have to lead improvements across the school. Staff value the support of the headteacher and depute headteacher and the opportunities they have to work together to improve their practice. As a result, they are more skilled in reflecting on their current practice and identifying key strengths and areas for further improvement. We have asked staff to build on this work to ensure that evaluation activity always focuses on improvements to children's learning. The school recognises that it now needs to involve parents and their children more effectively in the evaluation of its work. The recently developed monitoring and tracking arrangements now in place will help the headteacher and staff to continue to raise attainment and achievement.

During the previous Care Inspectorate inspection, the school had two requirements and three recommendations which have been met/or partially addressed. Outstanding issues relating to medication are carried forward in this inspection. As a result of this inspection, there are no requirements and two recommendations.

This inspection found the following key strengths.

- Happy children who have a positive attitude to learning.
- High quality team work of staff and their commitment to improving the work of the school.
- Children's skills in science as a result of the well-planned programme.

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

- Develop approaches to teaching and learning to ensure the learning needs of all children across the school are met fully.
- Develop further approaches to ensure that self-evaluation consistently leads to improvements in children's learning.

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. As part of its arrangements for reporting to parents on the quality of education, Perth and Kinross Council will inform parents about the school's progress.

Louise Turnbull
HM Inspector

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

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