

5 November 2013

Dear Parent/Carer

**Madderty Primary School
Perth and Kinross Council**

Recently, as you may know, we 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 impact of 'literature circles' and the quality of learning in the outdoor environment. 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?

Children are very proud of their school and are determined to do well. They feel valued because adults listen to what they have to say and consult openly with them about matters which affect their learning. Children are enthusiastic, motivated learners who work well independently and in groups. They like the active approach to their learning which they say helps them to remember things better. The new teachers are working together closely to build on the different kinds of feedback children receive from them about their learning. This is working well and is helping children recognise what they do well and plan to build on the areas they need more practice in. Children describe their school as one family and as a result, care for each other through being buddies both on the buses and in the school. All children take their roles on the action groups seriously and these groups are providing important leadership roles for older children. The health and eco groups are developing children's enterprising skills through working with staff to embed health and wellbeing and sustainability in the life of the school. Produce from the garden is used at lunchtime and children thrive on physical activity during the day. The Celebrating Success Group have made a very positive start to helping other children share their achievements from school and home at assembly time.

Across the school, children are making good progress in English language and literacy, mathematics and numeracy. They are articulate and engage very well in conversation using a wide range of vocabulary. Most children show a keen interest in books and read regularly for pleasure. Older children are benefiting from taking part in 'literature circles', which are improving their understanding of the techniques authors use. Teachers have made a start to improving children's writing skills further across the school. Children write for a wide range of purposes and staff are keen to ensure

children apply more of their skills in reading and conversation to their writing. In mathematics and numeracy, teachers have introduced a more active approach to learning and teaching to promote a deeper understanding of skills. Most children are good at written calculations and solving mathematical problems. They are less confident in mental calculations and staff are taking the right action to address this. Children across the school enjoy their learning in science, technologies and social studies. They worked in teams to solve problems and create a moving 'crazy car' and have presented visual representations of different animal life cycles. Children speak knowledgeably about their local area and its connections to farming. They can share what they know about ancient times and have reflected on the many themed days they organised to celebrate their learning with their community. Children take an active role in cultural life. They are proud of their success in musical and sporting events with other schools.

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

Staff across the school share responsibility for how well children learn. They have high expectations and, alongside the children, are creating an ethos of ambition through the values of the school. Teachers are getting to know children in their classes and provide lessons and activities which are challenging for most children. They have identified that they can increase the pace and levels of challenge in learning for some children and enable a few others to have more practice in key skills. The headteacher is providing well-judged support to staff in taking this forward. Children who need extra help in their learning are making strong progress. This is due to the combined work of support staff, teachers, parents and other professionals. The headteacher has been instrumental in ensuring that adults work collaboratively around the needs of children and that children themselves have a say in their learning. The school provides interesting and engaging real-life experiences for children through Curriculum for Excellence. In all classes, staff plan experiences in literacy and numeracy which help children to see the relevance of their learning and use their skills, for example, to write scientific reports. Health and wellbeing is embedded across the school through healthy approaches to eating, outdoor learning and the work of the children's action groups. Representatives from the community and specialists enhance children's learning and there is scope to build on this. Teachers are providing increasing choice for children through the well-planned topics of study. In taking the curriculum forward, staff recognise they can plan more together this session to ensure children progress their learning across all of the curricular areas.

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

The school has a very positive 'can do' approach to continuous improvement. The headteacher is relatively new to post and she has been joined this session by a completely new group of teachers. Children and staff have settled very well and are working as a team. Parents are pleased with the new start to the term and feel their views are being listened to. The headteacher is inspirational and has strong leadership qualities. Staff feel very well supported by her and are very clear about the priorities for improvement. There is scope to build on the ways in which teachers reflect on and take action to improve learning and teaching. They would also benefit from working closely with other teachers to share practice. This will enhance the quality of information teachers use to monitor and track children's progress.

Children are involved in leading many aspects of the school, and the pupil council play an active role in school improvement. The creativity group are making a visual representation of the school's vision and values. In using these and in working with the community as a basis for school improvement, the school is well placed to improve and continue to build on its strengths.

This inspection found the following key strengths.

- Confident, articulate children who are very proud of their school.
- Interesting and engaging learning experiences in school and in the wider community which help children to learn and experience success.
- The high quality of teamwork amongst the staff with children at the heart.
- The effective leadership of the headteacher in driving school improvement.

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

- Build on the approaches to meeting children's learning needs through establishing the right levels of pace and challenge in learning for all children.
- Continue to improve the curriculum through ensuring progression in children's learning throughout the school.
- Enable teachers to share practice and build on their evaluations of learning and teaching.

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, the education authority will inform parents about the progress.

Shona E S Taylor
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/MadertyPrimarySchoolPerthandKinross.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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