

21 January 2014

Dear Parent/Carer

**St Clement's RC Primary School
Dundee City 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 approaches to improving children's reading skills, the development of more active numeracy lessons and how well the school meets the needs of children with particular support 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?

As a result of the very caring, nurturing school community, almost all children enjoy their learning and achieve well. Children are treated fairly and with respect. They behave well and demonstrate good manners towards each other and to staff and visitors. In almost all lessons, children are clear about what they are learning and sometimes help to decide how they will know if they have been successful. Children comment on the quality of their own and others' work. Staff should ensure children know more about how well they are doing in all aspects of learning and what their next steps are. At all stages, children work responsibly in pairs and groups to support each other in decision-making tasks and to tackle challenging questions. Children extend their learning and further develop their personal and social skills through a broad range of out-of-class learning experiences including after-school clubs and trips to places of interest such as Glamis Castle and Auchingarrich Wildlife Centre. The P7 buddies and monitors act as good role models for younger children. Children are developing important skills and achieving well through regular participation in sports. Both the boys' and girls' football teams have been successful in local competitions and festivals. Children demonstrate organisation and team-working through music and drama performances. They are developing very well as citizens and are aware of the importance of health and wellbeing. The school has achieved an Eco-Schools Scotland silver award. Children's achievements are recognised very well. Staff now need to develop more robust approaches to tracking and monitoring children's achievements to help them be more aware of the important skills they get from these learning activities.

All children are making progress in developing literacy and numeracy skills which they apply in a range of contexts. Staff use a range of strategies to capture information about children's knowledge and skills. They have recently increased the use of formal assessments to gain a detailed picture of each child's progress and next steps. Most children enjoy talking through ideas with others and demonstrate confidence when addressing an audience. Children in P6 and P7 are increasing their language skills through learning French. Children are enthusiastic readers. Children in P1 are making very good progress recognising sounds and blending them together. At the upper stages, children use their reading skills effectively to research topics. Children's writing folios include examples of writing for different purposes. There is scope for most children in the upper stages to produce longer, more detailed pieces. Children in the early stages have made a good start in their understanding of basic number and money. As they move through the school, there is good evidence of progression in children's numeracy skills. By P7, most children can describe different ways to solve mathematical problems and use their numeracy skills, for example, when shopping or reading timetables. Most children understand how to make safe and healthy life choices. They understand healthy food choices and the importance of physical fitness. Staff need to continue to work with children and parents to ensure this knowledge of health and wellbeing is evident in children's choices at lunch and snack time. The school places children's mental, spiritual and social and emotional wellbeing at the core of its work. As a result, most children display positive attitudes and self-assurance.

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

Children are very well cared for and known well by all staff. Across the school, tasks and activities are varied and motivating. Teachers provide clear explanations and most use questioning that encourages children to think deeply. They recognise the need to use assessment information more effectively to plan differentiated learning for all children. In all classes, a few children need more challenging work and a brisker pace of learning. Class teachers are skilled in ensuring all children feel included in lessons. The school works closely with other agencies such as bi-lingual support, educational psychology and the Aberlour Bridges project so that children's needs are very well met. The support for learning teacher provides effective support for groups and individuals who might benefit from some specialist input. Across all stages, children use information and communications technology well to support their learning and complete assessments.

The curriculum is well grounded in Gospel values with a clear focus on ensuring children receive a strong foundation of skills for learning, work and life. The curriculum is broad and balanced with well-planned opportunities for children to make links across their learning. For example, children in P6 applied literacy and numeracy skills whilst learning more about the origins of chocolate and Fair Trade. Staff work well together and with partners to develop and enhance the curriculum. Joint projects with Dundee Rep have allowed children to participate in high-quality drama and dance experiences. Working with staff in other Catholic schools, teachers have begun to implement new guidance on religious education. Staff have a good understanding of Curriculum for Excellence. The school is well placed to move forward with plans to review science, expressive arts and technologies. Children in P7 are well supported when moving on to secondary school. There is scope for staff to work with nursery establishments and

secondary subject specialists to ensure children build on what they have already learned when they move on to a new stage.

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

The headteacher demonstrates strong leadership and a clear vision for continuing to improve the school. All staff show high levels of commitment to improving their work. Staff engage in regular professional dialogue to share ideas and support each other. They value professional learning opportunities and use these to help them drive forward school improvement priorities. The headteacher is very well respected across the school and community. He has an accurate overview of the school's strengths and development needs. We have asked the school to introduce more focused approaches to self-evaluation so that the impact of specific initiatives on children's learning and achievements is clear. Parents speak highly of the school but many don't take up their regular opportunities to share their views with the school. The school uses a range of approaches including Twitter and blogging to communicate with parents about the school's work. The Pupil Council plays an important role in the school. They have started some work with others across the shared campus to consider how all children can take part in developing their new learning environment. They could be more involved in evaluating teaching and learning.

This inspection found the following key strengths.

- Well-mannered, friendly, caring children who are keen to learn.
- Staff teamwork to create and sustain an inclusive, healthy ethos and nurturing learning environment.
- Effective partnership approaches to meeting the needs of vulnerable children.
- The work of the headteacher and staff to transform the culture of the school and increase opportunities for children to achieve widely.

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

- Ensure appropriate pace and challenge across the curriculum for all children.
- Ensure robust self-evaluation and improved tracking and monitoring of progress leads to improved learning and achievements for children
- Continue to develop the curriculum to ensure progression in children's skills across all curricular areas.

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, Dundee City Council will inform parents about the school's progress.

Patricia Watson
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/StClamentsRCPrimarySchoolDundeeCity.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.

If you want to give us feedback or make a complaint about our work, please contact us by telephone on 0141 282 5000, or e-mail: complaints@educationscotland.gsi.gov.uk or write to us addressing your letter to the Complaints Manager, Denholm House, Almondvale Business Park, Livingston EH54 6GA.