

Your Ref:

Our Ref: DISTRICT\INFO\QI INDICES\ES\REPORTS\
NITHSDALE\ST NINIAN'S\LET001-GB\EG\RL

25 January 2017

To:

**All Parents and Carers of Pupils at
St Ninian's Primary School**

**Children, Young People & Lifelong
Learning**

Woodbank

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LETTER REPORTING ON PROGRESS OF ST NINIAN'S PRIMARY SCHOOL SINCE EDUCATION SCOTLAND REPORT OF FEBRUARY 2016

St. Ninian's School was inspected by Education Scotland in October 2013. The inspection focussed on: 1) How well children learn and achieve; 2) How well the school supports children to develop and learn and 3) How well the school improves the quality of its work. Inspectors engaged with the school in continuing engagement visits in October 2014 and December 2015. Education Scotland disengaged following this last visit, as a result of significant improvement in key areas of the school's work since the original inspection. As part of the quality reporting arrangements of Education Services, Dumfries and Galloway Council, I am writing to inform you of the progress made by St Ninian's School since the publication of the Education Scotland report in February 2016.

Attainment and Achievement

There is an increase in commitment to creating opportunities for achievement and attainment for all pupils. This has led to a more positive ethos and learning environment. The Senior Management Team continues to develop and is strong, supportive and committed to ensuring that the positive raised profile of the school in the wider community is maintained. They are currently supporting all pupils, staff and parents in creating the Vision, Values, Aims and Motto for the new school. Staff are more confident and willing to lead, and be involved in changes impacting the school.

The "Scottish Attainment Challenge" and the 'small test' improvement model have been the methods used to support change in the school. Teachers are working, both within the school and cluster, with other teachers to share and agree levels across the curriculum. This will continue to be encouraged and built on. Through staff discussion and observing each other's practice, teachers have increased their expectations for their learners. Assessment information is indicating we are continuing to raise attainment across the school. Senior Management observations of teaching indicate teachers share learning intentions and success criteria more consistently. Learning conversations are occurring in most classrooms with almost all pupils able to discuss what they are learning and why.

Pupils' writing levels are improving. This is monitored by Senior Management twice a year.

Assessment information is shared with all staff and discussed at attainment meetings with a member of the management team. All staff have had appropriate training to enable them to use assessment information more effectively. Teachers are enthusiastic and keen to use this information which, to date, is showing some very positive results in Reading and Spelling, in particular.

Partnership Working

Partnership working with the local community and local businesses/charities has been very positive, giving pupils a wide variety of life skill opportunities; for example achieving their first Eco Green Flag, working in a local restaurant, singing at local charity events, visiting local businesses, being involved in local community litter picks and a Week of Work in school. The new Parent Council continues to be very supportive of the school and Head Teacher, especially on the journey to the new school. There has been an increase in parental involvement through consultations on Homework and various elements of the new school. Attendance within the school is improving.

Well-Being, Inclusion and Equality

Staff work to promote an ethos of equality and inclusion, modelling positive and mannerly behaviour, which is reciprocated by the pupils. Staff are sensitive to the needs of pupils and parents. All staff have recently updated their Child Protection training. Each class leads an assembly on a school value and another on an element of SHANARRI. Parents are encouraged to attend all assemblies. All staff are aware of GIRFEC and how the school promotes, demonstrates and actions opportunities for all pupils.

Self-evaluation for Self-improvement

Staff recognise that, as a school, there is still a need to work towards raising attainment levels in Literacy and Numeracy. Almost all staff have engaged positively and enthusiastically in the "Scottish Attainment Challenge" which is already showing an increase in attainment for all pupils involved. Staff confidence in agreeing a level of attainment is increasing, especially through working with cluster colleagues. Teachers give pupils the opportunity to be involved in target setting and making decisions about their learning.

The Nursery continues to build on its good practice. Children are fully involved in the planning and development of their learning space and what they want to learn. Staff regularly review the play opportunities and resources so they are much more responsive to the needs of the children. All children are fully involved in the upkeep of their PLPs. They are proud of their PLPs and are keen to share them with parents and visitors. Staff reviewed and improved the skills statements which are being used this year and have regular meetings to discuss children's progress and development. Next steps for the Nursery include sharing expectations of Early Level Writing and using the "How Good is Our Early Learning and Childcare" quality improvement document to further develop outdoor education.

The commitment of staff and the effective leadership of the Senior Management Team have ensured very good progress in addressing the Education Scotland's recommendations. The school continues to demonstrate very good capacity for improvement. I congratulate all the staff and children, as well as parents and the wider school community, on the very good progress made over the last year.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gillian Brydson', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Gillian Brydson
Head of Education