

26 April 2016

Dear Parent/Carer

**Pittencrieff Primary School and Nursery Class
Fife 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 learning in the outdoors, achievements and the ways in which the school works with parents. 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?

There are many positive features to children's learning and achievement. The school has a clear vision which promotes learning together wherever that learning may take place. Children demonstrate very well the school's core values of care, courtesy, respect and responsibility. As a result, children benefit from a purposeful and inclusive environment for learning. In the nursery, children are happy and settle well into their playroom. They are developing confidence through their play both indoors and outdoors. We observed children participating well in a few activities which encouraged them to be creative and independent. For example, children were motivated by measuring the rainfall as part of their learning in science. There is scope for children to be more involved in such activities. At the primary stages, for almost all of the time, teachers set clear aims for learning. Children are increasingly conversing with their teachers on how they will successfully meet these aims. They regularly discuss their learning in pairs while also having a well-judged focus on working individually. We have asked staff to ensure that children's learning experiences are of a consistently high quality across the school. Teachers have a strong focus on assisting children to gain a better understanding of their individual strengths and how to improve their learning. A particular strength of children's experiences is the way that activities beyond the classroom richly enhance learning. This includes the planned use of the outdoors and working with partners.

In the nursery, children benefit from taking part in activities that build a range of skills. For example, they develop performance skills by participating in a Nativity play. Children join their peers at the primary stages to take part in fundraising activities which increases their awareness of the needs of others. Children are making good progress in early literacy, numeracy and in other areas of their learning. They enjoy

sharing their experiences with each other and adults. A few children explore their thinking by asking relevant questions. They enjoy listening to stories with a few accessing books on their own. Children make regular use of the writing table. A few children are beginning to form letters and make positive attempts to write their name. Most children are developing well their understanding of early number. Children apply these skills by, for example, measuring ingredients and following picture recipes to independently make chocolate crispy cakes. At the primary stages, staff have successfully reviewed children's involvement in a wide range of achievements. They have linked these to opportunities in the life of the school and the wider community to develop a breadth of important skills over time. Across stages, children's skills in outdoor learning are progressively developed and recognised with the Natural Connection Award and John Muir Award. At the primary stages, staff have a clear focus on how they can help children attain as highly as possible. As a result, children are making good progress in literacy and language. Teachers have improved the programme for writing. We saw examples of children's writing which were detailed and based on interesting and motivating contexts across the curriculum. Children enjoy reading and would now benefit from a more specific focus on analysing the writer's style. In numeracy and mathematics, almost all children are making very good progress. We have asked staff to continue to talk to children about the purpose of their learning in numeracy and mathematics and to connect it to real-life situations. Across the nursery and the primary stages, children are showing a sound understanding of how a range of activities contribute to their health and wellbeing. These vary from the Munro Challenge to children's efforts in collecting evidence towards their school being considered for the Rights Respecting School award.

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

Across the school, staff give a high priority to providing quality support to help children develop and learn. Children feel safe and well cared for. Staff work with parents to help them support their children's learning at home. A notable success was the session with parents to give them information on their role in developing children's literacy skills through reading stories. In the nursery, children would benefit from staff planning more learning which is better matched to meeting their individual needs. For most of the time at the primary stages, children are appropriately challenged by the learning which is planned for them. We have agreed with staff the need to provide a brisker pace of learning at times. Across all stages, the needs of children who require additional support are met very effectively. In the nursery, staff are putting to good effect professional learning to support children with specific needs. The school works very well with partner agencies to put in place appropriate plans to ensure that children make suitable progress in their learning. Pupil Support Assistants also play a key role, especially in the flexible way in which they respond to supporting children.

At the primary stages, teachers have made strong progress in taking forward Curriculum for Excellence. This practice now needs to be embedded in the nursery to assist with strengthening the curriculum in line with national expectations. In the nursery, the curriculum provides children with a broad range of experiences which are based on play. As a next step, we have asked staff to state what they expect children to learn while also responding to their interests. At the primary stages, teachers have a clear and shared understanding of what they want children to achieve during their time in school. Working with children and parents, they have helpfully summarised this

in a poster. Across all stages, staff are making skilful use of the local community to enrich children's learning. This is strengthened further by the expertise that a wide range of partners contribute to children's learning. Across the primary stages, the curriculum has a clear focus on developing literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. There is clear evidence that changes to the curriculum are raising attainment for children.

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

The headteacher and her team provide effective leadership which has resulted in well-paced change at the primary stages. They are ably supported by staff who successfully lead projects which are improving the school. Staff work very well together. They share practice with each other and lead developments with neighbouring schools and for Fife Council. The headteacher has put in place a range of sound approaches to evaluate the work of the school from which clear priorities are set. These approaches should now be used to achieve consistent high-quality experiences across all stages. The headteacher needs to prioritise ensuring that the nursery is achieving a stronger start to children's education. The headteacher and staff are well-placed to ensure the school continues to improve.

During the previous Care Inspectorate inspection, Pittencrieff Primary School and Nursery Class had no requirements and two recommendations. Both recommendations have been met. As a result of this inspection, there are five requirements and one recommendation. More details can be found at the link below.

This inspection found the following key strengths.

- Children who demonstrate the school's values of care, courtesy, responsibility and respect.
- The teamwork shown by staff, led by the senior leaders, in taking forward well-paced change.
- The way in which outdoor learning and a range of opportunities for achievements extends the learning experiences of children.
- The school's approaches to working with partners to improve outcomes for children.

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

- Improve the curriculum in the nursery to ensure there is progression in all aspects of learning and to enable children to make suitable progress.
- Embed arrangements for reviewing practice across the school to ensure they lead to consistent high-quality learning and achievements.

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

Joan C Esson
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/PitthencrieffPrimarySchoolFife.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 0131 244 4330, 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.

Quality indicators help schools, education authorities and inspectors to judge what is good and what needs to be improved in the work of the school. You can find these quality indicators in the publication *How good is our school?*¹. Quality indicators for the nursery class can be found in the publication *Child at the Centre*². Following the inspection of each school, the Scottish Government gathers evaluations of three important quality indicators to keep track of how well all Scottish schools are doing.

The Care Inspectorate publishes quality grades to inform people and the Scottish Government about the quality of care services. Awarding grades at inspections is aimed at encouraging providers to identify and address areas for improvement. The Care Inspectorate also uses the grades to ensure its inspection activity is targeted and proportionate. The grades at inspection are awarded against four quality themes, details of which can be found on the Care Inspectorate website.

Here are Education Scotland's evaluations for Pittencrieff Primary School.

Improvements in performance	very good
Learners' experiences	very good
Meeting learning needs	very good

Nursery class

Improvements in performance	good
Children's experiences	good
Meeting learning needs	good

We also evaluated the following aspects of the work of the school and nursery class.

The curriculum	good
Improvement through self-evaluation	good

Here are the Care Inspectorate's gradings for the nursery class.

Quality of care and support	satisfactory
Quality of environment	good
Quality of staffing	good
Quality of management and leadership	satisfactory

¹ *How good is our school? The Journey to Excellence: part 3*, HM Inspectorate of Education, 2007, http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/Images/HowgoodisourschoolJtEpart3_tcm4-684258.pdf

² *The Child at the Centre (2), Self-Evaluation in the early years*, HM Inspectorate of Education, 2007, http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/inspectionandreview/Images/catcseey_tcm4-712692.pdf

Please note that the term "adequate" in these documents has been replaced with "satisfactory".

Nursery class

During the previous Care Inspectorate inspection, Pittencrieff Primary School and Nursery Class had no requirements and two recommendations. Both recommendations have been met. As a result of this inspection, there are five requirements and one recommendation.

Requirements

Requirement 1

The provider must ensure that they follow the policy and procedure for the storage and recording of medication for the children in their care and that it is updated in line with current guidance. Staff must be familiar with these documents.

This is in order to comply with: The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 SSI 2011/210 Regulation 4(1)(a) Welfare of users. Timescale: Within seven days of receipt of this report.

Requirement 2

The provider must ensure there are appropriate procedures for the prevention and control of infection and make proper provision for the health, welfare and safety of service users.

This is in order to comply with: The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 SSI 2011/210 Regulation 4 (1) (a) (d). Timescale: On receipt of this report.

Requirement 3

The provider must ensure that all accidents and incidents are appropriately recorded.

This is in order to comply with: The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 SSI 2011/210 Regulation 4(1)(a) Welfare of users. Timescale: Within seven days of receipt of this report.

Requirement 4

The provider must ensure that all attendances are appropriately recorded.

This is in order to comply with: The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 SSI 2011/210 Regulation 4(1)(a) Welfare of users and The Regulation of Care (Requirements as to Care Services) (Scotland) Regulations 2002 SSI 2002/114 Regulation 19(3)(d) Records. Timescale for implementation: With immediate effect.

Requirement 5

The provider must ensure that the premises are clean and suitable for purpose. Appropriate procedures for the prevention and control of infection must be put in place.

This is in order to comply with: The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 SSI 2011/210 Regulation 4(1)(a) Welfare of users. Timescale for implementation: Within seven days of receipt of this report

Recommendations

Recommendation 1

It is recommended that the provider ensures that an effective monitoring and evaluation system is put in place to identify areas for development for the service as a whole. National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16, Standard 14: Well managed service.

A copy of the full letter is available on the Education Scotland and Care Inspectorate websites at

http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/inspectionandreview/reports/school/primsec/Pit_tencrieffPrimarySchoolFife.asp and

<http://www.scswis.com/>