

25 August 2015

Dear Parent/Carer

**Kilsyth Primary School  
North Lanarkshire 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 impact of the many changes that have taken place recently. We also looked at how effectively children are engaged in their learning. 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?**

At all stages, children are actively engaged in their learning. They are enthusiastic, motivated and enjoy their learning. They understand the purpose of what they are learning and can explain it. They work very well together in groups and help each other frequently when completing tasks and problems. They contribute to lessons and discussions confidently. They ask relevant and interesting questions which helps to extend their knowledge and understanding. In almost all lessons, children are asked regularly to comment on their learning and understanding. In a few lessons, children are leading lessons and teaching their peers, for example, in science when learning about genetics. As a result, children are becoming independent learners and challenging themselves and each other. These successful approaches could be developed further across the curriculum, with children being given even more responsibility for their learning. Staff use a variety of creative teaching approaches to make learning more stimulating and exciting. They relate children's learning to real-life contexts which helps children to apply their skills and knowledge. Staff praise children regularly for their work and ideas. Children play an active part in the school, for example, as members of the Pupil Learning Council and Junior Road Safety Officers. They feel their views are sought and acted upon. Children are proud of their school.

The school provides children with many opportunities to learn beyond the classroom. For example, many children are involved in a wide variety of sporting, musical and personal achievement clubs. Children participate successfully in lunchtime and after-school clubs such as, the Glee Club and bikeability. Through these exciting experiences, children are enhancing their confidence, improving their interpersonal skills and taking on roles of responsibility. For example, children are part of a

committee to improve the playground and develop outdoor learning and natural play. Across the school, children are developing their literacy and numeracy skills well. At all stages, children read for enjoyment and at P6, children talk with confidence about their favourite authors. Children are increasing their writing skills mostly through topic activities. The school should continue to develop its approaches to improving reading and writing to ensure all children develop their skills to the highest level possible. Children understand the purpose of learning mathematics through activities linked to everyday experiences and are making suitable progress. The school should develop further children's skills in solving mathematical problems using a variety of contexts. We have asked staff to continue with their plans to build on the strong start which has been made to improving children's attainment in literacy and numeracy across the school.

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

All staff provide a very nurturing learning environment for all children. Overall, staff plan tasks and activities effectively to meet the individual learning needs of children. At times, the pace of lessons could be increased and tasks and activities could be more demanding and challenging. The school uses a variety of approaches successfully to develop greater self-confidence amongst children. It has developed very clear and effective systems which ensure that children who experience barriers to their learning receive targeted support and make progress. Children's learning plans and records are well maintained. Targets within the plans should be further refined. Learning support staff work very closely with teachers to provide effective support to children who require additional support in their learning. The school works very effectively with a range of external partners to support all children in their learning. Teachers successfully use national Curriculum for Excellence guidance and advice from North Lanarkshire Council to plan children's learning. The school has developed some areas of the curriculum, such as numeracy, literacy and health and wellbeing. Programmes related to these areas are well developed. Staff are creating exciting contexts for learning that help children apply their knowledge across different curricular areas. The school has plans in place to develop other areas of the curriculum, such as art and technologies. In developing these plans, the school will continue to ensure the progression of children's skills and knowledge in all areas of their learning. Across the school, children's learning is enhanced by educational visits and residential experiences, such as Kilbowie Centre. Children are very well supported as they move from nursery to P1 and from P7 to Kilsyth Academy. The school will continue to strengthen its curricular links with Kilsyth Academy.

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

The headteacher has a very clear and strong vision for improving the school. Since taking up her post two years ago, she has developed and progressed many aspects of the school very effectively. These developments have improved the quality of teaching and children's learning experiences. Staff and children are contributing positively to improving the school ethos. The school has established many new systems and approaches to help the school develop and move forward. The headteacher has observed learning and teaching, monitored teachers' plans and provided teachers with helpful feedback. Teachers also observe each other in lessons. As a result, teachers are becoming more reflective about their teaching and are sharing ideas with each

other frequently. The headteacher has asked staff, parents and children for their views about the school and incorporated them into the school's improvement plan. The headteacher and teachers are tracking and monitoring children's performance closely. They have regular discussions to ensure that children are making appropriate progress. The school involves the local and wider community in the life of the school to enhance children's learning experiences. Parents are regularly consulted through the Parent Council and at school events. Their comments are used to further improve the school.

This inspection found the following key strengths.

- Very courteous, enthusiastic and confident children who enjoy their learning and are proud of their school.
- Clear and effective systems which ensure well-matched support for children who require additional support in their learning.
- Staff teamwork to improve children's learning experiences.
- The strong and effective leadership of the headteacher in developing and moving the school forward.

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

- The school should continue to develop the curriculum.
- As planned, the school should continue to raise attainment.
- With the support of North Lanarkshire Council, the school should ensure that developments continue as planned.

### **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, North Lanarkshire Council will inform parents about the school's progress.

Hakim Din  
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/KilsythPrimarySchoolNorthLanarkshire.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](mailto:complaints@educationscotland.gsi.gov.uk) or write to us addressing your letter to the Complaints Manager, Denholm House, Almondvale Business Park, Livingston EH54 6GA