

15 December 2015

Dear Parent/Carer

**Muir Street 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 development of physical education and opportunities for staff to take on leadership roles across the school. 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?

Across the school, children are polite, well-behaved and keen to learn. They benefit greatly from a positive and caring learning environment. This helps children to feel safe, settled and be able to respond well to teachers and each other. Teachers consistently provide high-quality learning activities across the school which help almost all children to be motivated and engaged with their learning. Children answer questions enthusiastically and offer their views and opinions with confidence. When completing a task, they understand what it is they are doing, why they are doing it and what they will be learning next. As a result of a whole school focus on cooperative learning, children are working very well together in pairs and groups. Children are encouraged to think for themselves and would now benefit from more opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning. Children have a voice in the school through the pupil council and Eco-committee which contribute to school improvement.

Overall, across the school, children are making good progress in developing their literacy and numeracy skills. Children demonstrate good listening skills and can contribute ideas, knowledge or opinions in group discussions. A whole school approach to reading is having a positive impact in progressing children's reading. As a result of recent improvements to the teaching of reading, children's skills in studying characterisation and using a dictionary have improved. Most children enjoy reading for pleasure and are reading across a wide range of genres. Across the stages, most children are able to write for a variety of purposes including personal essays and report writing. Most younger children are developing their ability to explore numbers and quantities. For example, they can identify numbers in a given sequence within numbers to ten. Most older children can identify, name and describe features of a range of 2D and 3D shapes. At all stages, children would benefit from more

opportunities to develop their numeracy skills across other subjects areas. Overall, children are making good progress in developing their health and wellbeing. Younger children are developing an awareness of keeping safe. They are able to describe what you have to do to be safe when crossing the road and can explain why seatbelts are important. Children across the school have a good understanding of the importance of an active lifestyle. Aided by the school's recent focus on physical education, most children are enjoying participating in a range of team games, improving their performance and developing their level of fitness. Across the school, children are very knowledgeable about sustainability and speak confidently on biodiversity and the dangers of dropping litter. Children are also developing a good understanding of local, national and international causes and have raised money for a range of charities.

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

Across the school, children's needs are met very well. Children are well cared for and nurtured in all classes. Teachers provide a range of well-planned, stimulating and interesting learning activities to help ensure children's learning needs are met. In almost all classes, learning is suitably challenging and delivered at a brisk pace. A few more able children would benefit from more challenging activities. Teachers are skilled at being creative and flexible in their approaches to supporting children's individual interests and circumstances. They work successfully with support staff to help enable children with additional support needs to make progress with their learning. Most staff are quick to identify and support any children who may be having difficulty with their learning. They also respond sensitively and effectively to other factors which may affect learning such as social and emotional issues or family circumstances. The school's arrangements for working with other professionals, such as visiting specialists, are effective and valued by teachers, children and parents alike.

Across the school, children have access to a broad, balanced curriculum which is taking increasing account of Curriculum for Excellence. Staff are becoming confident in using national guidance to plan lessons including more opportunities for children to make connections in their learning across subjects. Children are beginning to benefit from new approaches such as the use of 'StudyLadder' and e-portfolios. These approaches are helping children to develop skills, recognise their own achievements and to identify their next steps with their learning. The school should develop further approaches to tracking and monitoring in order that children make suitable progress across all subject areas. The school has a well organised programme to help children feel confident when they move on to Braidhurst High School.

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

The highly experienced and effective headteacher has been successful in developing teamwork across the school. As a result, all teaching staff have taken on additional responsibilities to take forward school priorities. The headteacher is ably supported by the deputy headteacher and principal teacher and collectively they have the respect of the whole school community. Together with the staff, senior managers have made a concerted effort to improve children's learning experiences and refresh a range of subject areas such as mathematics and physical education. The school has a range of approaches to help evaluate the quality of its work. However, there is scope to

better gather evidence of children's improvement with their learning as they progress through the school. This would help determine if school initiatives are having a positive impact on children's attainment and achievement.

This inspection found the following key strengths.

- Positive, nurturing relationships across the school.
- Class teachers ability to provide high-quality learning activities that meet the needs of children with additional support needs.
- Confident, polite, well-behaved children who are fully engaged in their learning.
- Opportunities provided for staff to take on leadership roles to help improve the school.

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

- Develop tracking and monitoring approaches to ensure all children achieve highly across all subject areas.
- Develop approaches to gather evidence which helps determine if school initiatives are leading to improvements in children's attainment and achievement.

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.

Steven McPherson
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/MuirStreetPrimarySchoolNorthLanarkshire.asp>

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