

Education Scotland, Europa Building, 450 Argyle Street, Glasgow G2 8LG

t 0141 242 0100 f 0141 242 5757 e glasgow@educationscotland.gsi.gov.uk

w <http://www.hmie.gov.uk/>

Textphone 01506 600236¹

17 January 2012

Dear Parent/Carer

**Firpark Primary School
North Lanarkshire Council**

Recently, as you may know, my colleagues and I visited and inspected your child's school. Throughout our visit, we talked to many parents and children and we worked closely with the headteacher and staff. We wanted to find out how well children were learning and achieving and how well the school supported 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 inclusion within the joint campus, local and wider community and collaborative working with a wide range of partnership agencies. As a result, we were able to find out how good the school was at improving children's education. I would now like to tell you what we found.

How well do children learn and achieve?

We found your children to be enthusiastic about most of their learning and that they work hard in school. They are enjoying being in the outstanding new building which gives them a range of exciting new learning opportunities. Children are particularly confident in choosing activities and are especially motivated when learning outdoors in the extensive garden area. They are developing a sense of responsibility for looking after the environment and work well with Cathedral Primary School on the joint planning committee and garden club. In most classes, teachers make learning fun, meaningful and interesting for the children. There is scope to make this type of learning happen more regularly across all classes. Children showed a real enthusiasm for music within a very good range of activities such as Beats of Brazil, Charan (dance workshop), music therapy and weekly music lessons. They have performed these in public and as a result are more confident and proud of their achievements.

Across the school, most children make good progress in language and communication and mathematics. They communicate well with each other and with adults using a range of supports including technology where appropriate. Most children are developing well their skills of listening to each other and adults. Children enjoy stories and looking at books. Overall, most children are making good progress in developing reading and writing skills appropriate to their stage. Most children are making good progress in numeracy. Children have some opportunities to develop their skills in literacy and numeracy in real-life situations, for example, in the Speedway Café. Staff now plan to develop this more fully across the school.

¹ This is a service for deaf users. Please do not use this number for voice calls as this will not connect.

Children are gaining understanding of healthy foods through activities in the teaching kitchen. They are also developing confidence and independence in aspects of looking after themselves.

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

Children across the school are very well cared for. All children are happy and enjoy school. Overall, staff identify children's needs effectively and provide appropriate tasks and activities to help children make progress. A few children need clearer and more suitable targets to help them make better progress in their learning. Staff work very well with a range of partner agencies to help support children and their families. Children receive a broad and balanced curriculum. A range of outside agencies, links with the community and volunteers give children a wide range of learning experiences. Staff are now developing new approaches to how they track and record children's individual progress and achievements across all aspects of learning. The school places a strong focus on keeping parents up to date with children's progress. The school would now like to involve parents more fully in supporting their child's learning.

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

We are confident in the way your children's school improves its work. Staff, parents, children and the education authority are fully involved in evaluating the work of the school and help identify areas for improvement. In a short time, the headteacher and depute headteacher have made significant improvements to the quality of learning and teaching across the school. They know the school very well and have a clear sense of how they want the school to improve. Staff reflect on their work with children and are committed to continually improving. There is a very strong sense of team work across the school. The Parent Council engages well with the school and has been very helpful in taking forward parents views when planning the layout of the new school.

This inspection of your school found the following key strengths.

- Happy, confident children who work hard in school.
- Partnership working with other agencies to support children and their families.
- Joint working with the adjacent school which, in a short time has led to improved outcomes for children.
- The outstanding new building which gives opportunities for a wide range of learning experiences.
- The strong leadership of the headteacher and the depute headteacher and the commitment of staff to improving the school.

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

- Continue to develop approaches to teaching and learning to ensure consistent high-quality learning experiences across all classes.
- Continue to develop staff understanding of the principles of Curriculum for Excellence.
- Continue to develop tracking and monitoring of children's progress to ensure all children maximise their potential.
- Further develop approaches to developing literacy and numeracy through motivating real life contexts.

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. The local authority will inform parents about the school's progress as part of the authority's arrangements for reporting to parents on the quality of its school.

Sadie Cushley
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.hmie.gov.uk/ViewEstablishment.aspx?id=8699&type=2>.

Please contact us if you want to know how to get the report in a different format, for example, in a translation. You can contact us at enquiries@educationscotland.gsi.gov.uk or write to us at BMCT, Education Scotland, Denholm House, Almondvale Business Park, Almondvale Way, Livingston EH54 6GA.

If you want to give us feedback or make a complaint about our work, please contact 01506 600200, or write to us at the above address or e-mail: feedback@educationscotland.gsi.gov.uk.