

5 November 2013

Dear Parent/Carer

**St Peter's Primary School and Nursery Class  
Renfrewshire 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 how well the school is using assessment to support children's learning. We also looked at the development of children's literacy skills through their 'Author Studies' and how well the school's eco work is helping to develop children's citizenship skills. 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?**

Children across the school benefit from a very caring ethos built on Catholic values which are integral to the life of the school. In the nursery class, children's relationships with each other and with staff are very positive. This contributes to the positive climate and helps children settle well to learning. As they work and play well together, children routinely discuss what they are doing. They confidently make decisions about what they want to learn and the direction their learning should take. At the primary stages, most children are motivated and keen to learn. Most are attentive and well behaved. Teachers helpfully make it clear to children in lessons what they are expected to learn. Some then use this very well to discuss whether learning has been successful. All children have begun to complete 'learning logs' which is helping them to reflect individually on their learning across the week. Most enjoy using these logs and feel that they are helping them to think about how to improve their work. This work should now be developed further to enable children to identify their next steps in learning better and discuss with staff how they are going to achieve these. Children value the improved opportunities they have to express their opinion and be more involved in the life of their school. They feel that they are listened to and their ideas for school improvement are taken into account. Children across the nursery and primary stages are making good progress in learning about their health and wellbeing. A number of children attend popular lunchtime clubs which are run in partnership with the Active Schools coordinator. These are helping to develop children's physical and social wellbeing and are stimulating interest in a range of sporting activity.

A key feature of the school is the development of children's citizenship skills. Every primary-aged child contributes to one of the school's citizenship groups. These

include Eco-Schools Scotland, Fairtrade and road safety groups. The school is working towards its third Eco-Schools Scotland green flag. Through this work, children have a very well-developed awareness of environmental issues. In the nursery class, almost all children are making very good progress in developing their early literacy and numeracy skills. Almost all enjoy listening to stories and a few enjoy exploring books by themselves. A few of the older children are developing an awareness of initial sounds, recognise letter names and are writing their names and other words that are important to them. Almost all can sort, match and use mathematical language. Most can name simple shapes during play experiences. At the primary stages, most children are making very good progress in English language and literacy, mathematics and numeracy. They are developing their literacy and numeracy skills very well, often by using them in other curriculum areas and applying them to real-life situations. Most children listen well. They express their thoughts and feelings clearly and articulately. They read for enjoyment and can reflect on and discuss a range of fiction and non-fiction texts. Across the school, children write extensively and for a variety of purposes. Most are confident in their number work and are accurate in mental and written calculation. In solving mathematical problems most are able to explain how they reached their answers. Children's achievements are promoted and celebrated very well across the school.

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

The curriculum ensures a broad range of learning for all children. Across the nursery and primary stages, staff are making good progress in improving programmes of work by using Curriculum for Excellence guidance. Staff have recently improved programmes for English language, mathematics and health and wellbeing. As a result, children are enjoying more approaches which involve them being more active in their learning and are more able to make links between different areas of their learning. Staff should now continue with their plans to develop the curriculum further to ensure that children progress well across all areas of their learning. Across the school, teachers should continue to develop approaches to assessment to ensure that tasks are planned at the right level. The 'Author Studies' event is contributing well to developing children's enterprising attitudes as well as their literacy skills. Children are supported well in moving from home to nursery and from nursery to P1. This includes the offer of home visits to support partnership working between families and the school. The school should continue to build on its existing curricular links with the associated secondary school to ensure continuity in children's learning.

Across the school, staff provide a nurturing environment for children. They help children feel safe and well cared for. In the nursery class, staff meet the needs of children very well. They take good account of children's different needs and provide good support to those who need extra help. At the primary stages, staff plan lessons which meet the learning needs of most children. For some, the work is not always challenging enough. Staff need to ensure that they plan learning which is at the right level of difficulty for children with different learning needs. The school identifies children who require additional support with their learning very well. This awareness is then used well to work out how best to engage with partners and use resources to support children's needs. Staff provide regular and varied homework activities which support classwork effectively.

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

The headteacher, having been in post for only a year, has a clear vision for the school. She has quickly gained the respect and confidence of children, parents, staff and the community. She is building on existing strengths and has already led a number of necessary improvements. The headteacher is ably supported by a depute headteacher and a principal teacher who carry out their remits well. The depute headteacher leads the nursery effectively. The principal teacher has led the eco work very well. Senior managers visit classes, sample work and give helpful feedback on teachers' planning. Staff are encouraged to take on leadership responsibilities, such as leading working groups on the curriculum, and do so willingly. Staff are committed to improving experiences for children. They are increasingly visiting each other's classes and trying out new learning and teaching approaches as a result. The school now needs to continue to improve approaches to assessing and tracking children's progress and achievement to support learning across all areas of the curriculum. Under the leadership of the headteacher, the school is very well placed to continue to improve.

This inspection found the following key strengths.

- Children's learning experiences in the nursery.
- The extent to which children have a say in shaping improvements.
- The development of children's citizenship skills.
- Children's attainment in English language and mathematics.
- The strong leadership shown by the headteacher in her first year in post.

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

- Continue to develop the curriculum taking account of Curriculum for Excellence.
- Ensure that tasks and activities are well matched to the needs of all children.
- Develop further the arrangements for assessing and tracking children's progress and achievement across all curriculum areas.

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

Marie McAdam  
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/StPetersPrimarySchoolRenfrewshire.asp>

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