

26 August 2014

Dear Parent/Carer

**Boghall Primary School
West Lothian Council**

Recently, as you may know, my colleagues and I visited and inspected your child's school. During our visit, we talked to parents and children and we 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 shared language used by everyone to encourage good learning, partnership working and the promotion of equality and inclusion to allow all children to achieve well at 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, helpful and well behaved. They are happy, enjoy coming to school and are very proud of their school. Almost all children work well together and show they can cooperate with each other. The school is helping them to become more confident. In almost all lessons, teachers make sure that children are clear about what they are learning and about how they can improve. Children, staff and parents contribute actively to the life of the school and the wider community. Pupil voice is valued at Boghall and children are active participants in initiatives such as the local annual Newlands day procession, pupil council, international education links and buddying activities. Children are achieving success through participation in sports including football, hockey and martial arts. They are developing and communicating their own beliefs well through their work as a Rights Respecting School. Almost all children gain confidence through performing in the very successful annual school shows. The school has strong links with the local community and works hard to ensure children learn about their town's history and the facilities and resources available for them. Information and communications technology is used well across learning.

Children are making good progress in literacy and numeracy. Those requiring additional support, including a few learners with English as an additional language, are making good progress through careful planning and targeted support offered by teachers and support staff. Most children are good at expressing their ideas and explaining their learning to others. They participate in discussions well, expressing their ideas with confidence. The majority of children are interested in reading and can discuss the novels they have read. Writing across the school is good. Children write

well for a wide variety of purposes, often linked to other areas of their classwork. Their skills in numeracy are progressing well. By P2, children are beginning to show an understanding of money. By the middle stages, they can tell the time confidently. By P7, children can talk with knowledge and understanding about using their numeracy skills in real life situations. We have asked staff to continue their work to improve children's attainment in literacy and numeracy. Children are making good progress in health and wellbeing. They recognise the need for regular physical activity to support different aspects of their health. They are developing skills for life and work through opportunities to learn from helpful school partners and through teamwork. Staff and children have put in place individual profiles to demonstrate children's achievements. The school should continue with its plans to develop approaches to tracking children's progress across the curriculum. This will ensure they all attain as highly as possible.

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

Across the school, children benefit from a nurturing, respectful and caring environment. In most classes observed, tasks and activities are very well matched to the needs of learners. Classroom teachers, support assistants and outside agencies work very well with children who need additional help with their learning. They provide them with helpful and relevant support plans, including health plans where appropriate. Across the school, children benefit from a rich and relevant curriculum that is based on Curriculum for Excellence principles and the school's vision of having fun alongside motivating and exciting learning. Children are learning to apply a range of higher-order thinking skills, such as problem-solving and leadership skills in a wide range of curriculum contexts such as within very successful enterprise and business activities. Visiting specialists, including parent helpers, enrich learning in music, sport and art and design. Learning across subjects is stimulating and allows children to develop their varied interests and needs. For example, in the Africa project in P4 and P5, children wrote letters and completed diary entries and postcards about Africa. They learned to use atlases and work out locations including a few African island locations. They learned to use African drums, made masks, sang African songs and learned about the history and geography of the country. Transition arrangements for children moving from nursery to P1 and for those in P7 moving to Bathgate Academy are very effective.

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

The headteacher is an effective leader who is passionate about trying to ensure that every child has the best life chances. She is very well respected by the school community including parents, staff and pupils. The school has benefited greatly from this quality of leadership at a time of educational change. The headteacher is assisted by a supportive depute headteacher, an acting principal teacher and a highly motivated group of staff who share her vision. There are examples of outstanding learning and teaching in the school and all staff should aspire to reach this high standard. We have asked staff to develop further their reporting systems to give children and parents further clarity on achievement. The Parent Council is a positive influence for improvement. Teachers work together regularly to discuss their work and develop new ideas together. As a result, the school is very well-placed to continue to improve.

This inspection found the following key strengths.

- Polite, well-behaved, friendly, children who are very proud of their school.
- The effective leadership of the headteacher and the contribution of all staff towards creating a very positive climate for learning.
- The warm, nurturing relationships between staff and pupils.
- High quality enterprise and business partnerships.
- Strong links to learning through the local community.

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

- Continue to develop effective arrangements to track and monitor children's progress so they attain as highly as possible.
- Continue to improve attainment in literacy and numeracy.

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

Aileen Monaghan
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/BoghallPrimarySchoolWestLothian.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 or write to us addressing your letter to the Complaints Manager, Denholm House, Almondvale Business Park, Livingston EH54 6GA.