

5 March 2019

Dear Parent/Carer

In December 2017, HM Inspectors published a letter on St Luke's Primary School. The letter set out a number of areas for improvement which we agreed with the school and Midlothian Council. Recently, as you may know, we visited the school again. During our visit, we talked to children and worked closely with the headteacher and staff. We heard from the headteacher and other staff about the steps the school has taken to improve. We looked at particular areas that had been identified in the original inspection. As a result, we were able to find out about the progress the school has made and how well this is supporting children's learning and achievements. This letter sets out what we found.

Staff should increase the opportunities for children to be actively involved in planning and assessing their own learning to increase their understanding of the purpose of learning.

The school is taking positive steps to ensure children understand themselves as learners. The school's vision has children's achievements and learning at the centre of all it does. Across the school there is a positive learning climate which is enabling children to make the best possible progress. In most lessons, children know what they are learning and what is expected of them in taking responsibilities for their own learning. In the very good practice observed, expectations are high, children know when they are successful and teacher questioning is skilled in providing challenge and feedback about learning. We have asked that staff continue to share this practice more widely across the school.

Since the original inspection, staff have successfully involved children widely in the life of the school. The impact of the various roles and responsibilities children take across the school, is seen through the very positive relationships and attitude to learning. Children are well behaved, mannerly and respectful. The Anti-Bullying Ambassadors are well supported through clear guidance and expectations of behaviour. This has led to a positive school environment where children feel ready to learn.

Teachers and support staff work effectively together to support children in their achievements. The school's positive environment results from the shared ambition the staff team has for children. Since the original inspection, staff have taken positive steps to involve parents more in their child's learning. New approaches to reporting to parents/carers are established and enable children and parents to play a greater role in reviewing progress and identifying next steps in learning. Family engagement is a positive feature of the school.

Staff should work collaboratively to realise the whole school vision of raising attainment in a learning environment where staff and pupils have high expectations of themselves and each other.

It is clear that the school now has a shared understanding and commitment to raising attainment and achievement for all learners. The headteacher has maintained a relentless focus on raising expectations, improving consistency in learning and teaching and ensuring achievement for all. As a result, the school is successfully addressing this area for

improvement. The headteacher and staff team have revisited the school's motto, 'we believe, we achieve'. This appropriately underpins the work of the school. Staff articulate how they are helping to promote this in all that they do. Children have a greater understanding of how staff are helping them to 'believe and achieve'.

Senior leaders have correctly maintained a strong focus on raising attainment and introduced a wide range of interventions and approaches to achieve this. Data is gathered and used effectively. They have developed a number of approaches which help to present a clear picture of children's progress. As a result, children now receive support and challenge appropriately.

Of particular note is the school's commendable work in improving approaches to behaviour management. This has significantly improved the school ethos. Across the school, children enjoy respectful relationships with each other and with staff. Positive relationships in classes and across the school is a particularly strong feature. Information gathered from pre-inspection questionnaires shows that almost all children feel safe in the school and believe that staff deal with bullying well. This is a significant improvement from information gathered in the original inspection's questionnaires. This is a result of the more consistently applied approaches to behaviour management which are understood by the whole school community.

Overall, most children are making good progress from their prior Curriculum for Excellence levels in literacy and numeracy. Those children who require additional support are making appropriate progress. A significant number of new approaches to teaching reading have been put in place. There are early indications that these are having a positive impact on children's progress in reading. Overall, the majority of children are making good progress in writing. The school recognises this is an area for continued development. Children continue to make positive progress in numeracy. The school has an appropriate focus on skills progression in numeracy which is leading to consistency in how well children achieve across Curriculum for Excellence levels. New arrangements for teaching numeracy have been introduced which are helping staff provide support and challenge to different groups of learners. This is also supporting a brisker pace of learning in numeracy and mathematics.

What happens next?

The school has made good progress since the original inspection. We are confident that the school has the capacity to continue to improve and so we will make no more visits in connection with this inspection. Midlothian Council will inform parents about the school's progress as part of its arrangements for reporting on the quality of its schools.

Jackie Maley
HM Inspector