

22 March 2022

Dear Parent/Carer

Her Majesty's Inspectors of Education are currently carrying out visits to some schools and early learning and childcare settings across Scotland. When we wrote to you after the last inspection of Keir Hardie Primary School, we said that we would engage with the school to report on progress. We recently engaged in discussion with staff and the local authority and carried out a visit to Keir Hardie Primary School. Our engagement helped us learn more about how children and their families have been supported through the COVID-19 pandemic. We also heard about approaches that have been working well to support children's health and wellbeing, learning and progress. We discussed with the headteacher and local authority officer the school's progress in taking forward the recommendations from our original inspection.

This letter sets out what we found during our visit.

### **Supporting children, young people and families through COVID-19**

Staff worked collaboratively with colleagues from neighbouring schools to support children within a local hub during the first period of remote learning. The headteacher rightly prioritised the health and wellbeing of children and staff during this period. Staff made regular calls to families to check in on their wellbeing and provide useful guidance about learning at home. The headteacher maintains a focus on supporting health and wellbeing for all as the school community starts to recover from the pandemic.

Staff are now trying to focus on identifying gaps in learning within literacy and numeracy. They have made a good start in addressing these gaps in learning. They should build on this good start to ensure children make good progress and continue to improve attainment. Staff have ensured an appropriate focus on identifying wellbeing needs and improving how they address these through developing nurturing classrooms. The headteacher and practitioners in the nursery adapted arrangements for children transferring into P1. They offered children virtual classroom tours and recorded updates to provide useful information about the school. This helped reduce anxiety about the transition from nursery to school.

### **Progress with recommendations from previous inspection**

The headteacher and staff have worked well together to address action points from the last inspection visit. They now have a clearer understanding of school improvement priorities and their role in taking these forward. The headteacher has made a good start to improving leadership across the school and nursery. She provides an increasing range of meaningful opportunities for staff to work together to help improve the school.

Staff have worked well together to improve the quality of learning and teaching across the school. They are beginning to use a more consistent approach to delivering lessons using the 'Keir Hardie Memorial effective lesson' as a guide. This approach enables children to be clearer about the skills and knowledge they are learning. All teachers now provide children with learning experiences that meet their needs more effectively. As a result, almost all

children engage well in their tasks and activities. Staff should now build on this good start and continue to provide children with more challenge in their learning to help raise levels of attainment across the school.

The headteacher and staff have improved approaches to assessing children's progress. They now assess most aspects of literacy and numeracy and track children's progress throughout the year. A clearer approach to assessment is ensuring that staff have a better understanding of where children are in their learning. Staff should continue to link assessments to the National Benchmarks to support their decisions on whether children have achieved a Curriculum for Excellence level.

Staff have worked well together to create progression pathways in all curricular areas. This now helps staff to plan learning that allows children to build on their skills as they move through the school. They now provide children with a range of experiences across the curriculum. Children are more motivated by these more relevant contexts for learning.

Since the original inspection, there have been significant changes to staffing within the nursery and the pattern of attendance available for children. The school leadership team and practitioners have worked well with staff from North Lanarkshire Council to improve the environment, the structure of the day and learning experiences in the nursery. As a result, children now experience learning in all curricular areas across the playroom and outdoors. Practitioners have developed new ways to plan for children's learning. This is much more responsive to children's interests.

Across the school and nursery staff now meet the needs of children with additional support needs very well. Parents and children are now more fully involved in setting targets for children to help meet their needs. As a result, children with additional needs are making better progress in their learning.

## What happens next?

Understandably, the school has been responding to the challenges resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. These have had a significant impact on the work of the school. Staff are implementing plans to support recovery. Staff have also been making progress in taking forward the areas for improvement from the original inspection. We recognise that the school needs some more time to implement fully its priorities for improvement. We have asked North Lanarkshire Council to provide us with further information about attainment of children within six months and to update us on progress within one year of the publication of this letter. We will work together with local authority officers to agree what will happen next. Should we require another visit to the school, we will inform, parents/carers. Otherwise, North Lanarkshire Council will continue to inform parents about the school's progress as part of its usual arrangements for reporting on the quality of its education service.

Sadie Cushley  
HM Inspector