

11 June 2024

Dear Parent/Carer

In May 2023, HM Inspectors published a letter on Bun-sgoil Chille Mhoire agus Sgoil-Àraich - Kilmuir Primary School and Nursery Class. The letter set out a number of areas for improvement which we agreed with the school and The Highland 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.

**As a priority, review approaches to long-term planning for each curriculum area to ensure children experience progression, breadth and depth in their learning.**

Staff are beginning to develop long-term planning for each curriculum area to ensure children experience progression, breadth and depth in their learning.

The headteacher and staff have recently developed Cille Mhoire (Kilmuir's) curriculum purpose to reflect the unique context, values and aims of the school. In doing so, they effectively consulted with children and families to ensure that there is a clear understanding of expectations for children's learning.

Teachers use local authority's P1–P7 three-year curriculum map to plan learning and track progress across the broad general education in a majority of curricular areas. Teachers now ensure children experience two hours of quality physical education per week. They now need to develop learning pathways that build on what children already know in all areas of the curriculum. This will ensure that children receive their full entitlement to a broad and general education.

Teachers in the Gàidhlig Medium Class and the English Medium Class plan interesting activities for children across the curriculum. They have developed useful plans, so they reflect on the skills for life and work that children develop through projects. Teachers should now take greater account of children's interests when planning learning to enable more choice.

**Improve further approaches to learning and teaching. Ensure all children experience consistently high-quality learning experiences across the curriculum.**

Staff have made a promising start to improving further learning and teaching to ensure all children experience high-quality learning across the curriculum. They should continue to build on this further to ensure consistency across the school.

Supported by the headteacher and local authority, staff have taken positive steps in improving learning, teaching and assessment approaches across the school. They have

developed an agreed approach, known as the 'lesson evaluation toolkit.' This is beginning to ensure a more consistent approach to the planning of learning. Staff should review the 'toolkit' to ensure it is bespoke to Gàidhlig Medium Education. It should include how children in English Medium's learning of Gàidhlig as a second language supports an immersion environment. The headteacher should ensure older children in the Gàidhlig Medium class learn through the medium of Gàidhlig all of the time.

Teachers use questioning well to check children's understanding of what they are learning. They now need to improve questioning further to ensure children understand their next steps in learning and their progress towards targets. Teachers should ensure that all children experience learning more closely matched to their needs.

Staff have made positive progress to improve assessment approaches across the school. The headteacher has introduced a helpful assessment and parental engagement calendar. Teachers are being supported to develop a shared understanding of national Benchmarks of learning through joint working with schools in the local area. They recognise that, while there have been improvements in staff's confidence, professional judgements in relation to children's achievement of Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) levels are not yet robust. It is important that staff continue to work together to ensure results from assessments directly inform planning. This should ensure all children, including those who require additional challenge, make appropriate progress through CfE levels.

A few children who experience barriers to their learning have individual child plans. These highlight interventions to support them in their learning. These plans need to evidence better children's progress in relation to individual targets. Targets need to be more specific and measurable to ensure they are effective and lead to improved outcomes for children. Staff should ensure that children and parents share their views and agree targets and actions.

### **Continue to raise attainment in literacy and English, numeracy and mathematics and reading and writing in Gàidhlig.**

There has been limited progress in raising attainment in literacy and English, numeracy and mathematics and reading and writing in Gàidhlig.

Children's attainment in literacy and English, literacy and Gàidhlig and numeracy and mathematics has improved since the original inspection in May 2023. This is particularly evident in literacy and Gàidhlig. The school's data on attainment levels for 2022/23 shows that most children achieved appropriate CfE levels in both mediums of learning. A few children were working beyond expected levels. A few could be achieving more. Whilst attainment has increased, there remains scope for it to improve further. The headteacher needs to continue to be vigilant and ensure that current processes result in accurate data about children's progress.

### **Attainment over time**

The headteacher continues to work with the local authority to develop effective ways to track attainment in literacy and Gàidhlig, literacy and English and numeracy and mathematics over

time. Their approach is at an early stage of development. Staff should ensure rigour in using data of attainment over time to inform interventions and to support further raised attainment.

**Improve further approaches to self-evaluation to build on the strengths of the school, identify and address areas of improvement. All staff should work effectively as a team to improve the work of the school. They should do this with a strong focus on improving outcomes for all learners.**

There has been strong progress in improving further approaches to developing self-evaluation to build on the strengths of the school, identify and address areas for improvement.

Teachers have worked as a team to develop a consistent understanding of what makes a good lesson. The headteacher should now support staff to develop critical feedback skills to ensure that feedback on lessons is more effective. Feedback should clearly highlight areas of strength and areas for development.

The headteacher has met with teachers to review their professional development in line with the General Teaching Council for Scotland standards. Teachers have developed action plans to support their developing skills in areas of interest in line with school improvement priorities. An important next step would be to formally evaluate these plans with each other and evidence the impact they have on outcomes for children.

The headteacher and staff have consulted with parents and children to develop their curriculum rationale. A minority of parents disagree that the school takes their views into account when making changes. The headteacher and staff should now ensure that parents are consulted more routinely regarding school improvement initiatives.

### What happens next?

The school has made some positive progress since the original inspection. A few areas require further progress to be made. We will ask for a report on progress within 12 months of the inspection. This report will inform any decision made by Education Scotland regarding further engagement. This may include another inspection visit. When such a decision is made, we will write to you again detailing the improvements the school has made and outlining any further action, agreed with The Highland Council that we intend to take.

Denise Penman  
HM Inspector