

21 March 2017

Dear Parent/Carer

**Victoria Primary School and Nursery Class
North Lanarkshire Council**

In September 2013, HM Inspectors published a letter on your child's school. The letter set out a number of areas for improvement which we agreed with the school and North Lanarkshire Council. We subsequently returned to the school to look at how it had continued to improve its work, and published another letter in November 2014 and January 2016. 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.

Improve outcomes for children in the nursery class

Overall, children continue to be happy and settled in the nursery environment. They are now making better use of different areas across the playrooms. Staff need to continue to develop and carefully monitor the learning environment to ensure maximum engagement of all children. Staff have planned more opportunities for children to develop their literacy and numeracy skills across their learning. In their imaginative play in the 'Post Office', children engage enthusiastically in early writing activities and use new vocabulary. In this context, they also apply their numeracy skills as they count envelopes and parcels. Supporting the development of children's literacy and numeracy skills in meaningful ways should continue to be a focus for all practitioners in the nursery class. Overall, children are listening better to each other and adults. Children enjoy sharing story books with adults. They recall main events and characters in familiar stories which they engage with as part of a new early reading programme. Outdoor learning contexts need to be improved to support richer and more exciting learning. There has been no development of this area since our last visit. Overall, children are making better progress in the nursery class, however there remains great scope for improvement. We have discussed with the Senior Leadership Team ways in which this can be taken forward.

Continue to develop approaches to meeting the needs of all children, to bring about further improvements to achievement

There has been very good progress in improving many aspects in the primary classes. Across the primary stages, children continue to benefit from a very positive learning environment. They are very friendly and well behaved. They proudly shared their learning with us, highlighting their progress in overtaking identified targets. Children appreciate how they are more involved in their learning. The professional learning opportunities, funded through the Scottish Attainment Challenge, are providing improvements in the teaching of literacy and numeracy. Staff are employing more active approaches to the teaching of maths which is impacting positively on children's progress. Children now benefit from increased opportunities to develop their independence and leadership skills. Commendably, all older children are represented on one of the pupil voice groups. Staff in the primary classes help to lead these groups along with children. The school has taken considerable steps to increase opportunities for children to achieve more widely. Positively, the school provides, along with partners including active schools, a wide range of out of school clubs. To support future developments in the curriculum, we have asked staff to define more clearly what they believe children are entitled to experience, learn and enjoy at Victoria Primary School. It is important that the whole school community is involved in this process.

Further improve arrangements for using self-evaluation to plan for improvements

Approaches to self-evaluation have improved considerably since our last visit. The headteacher has now been in the permanent post for just over a year. She has a clear vision for the school which she is sharing successfully with the school community. She is ably supported by the two new principal teachers. Together, they provide provide strong, much needed leadership and direction for this school. Commendably, they are empowering children and staff to influence school improvement. Staff now take on specific leadership roles to develop aspects of the primary curriculum. Staff demonstrate great enthusiasm and energy to secure improved outcomes for their learners. Pupil voice groups are successfully making many aspects of Victoria Primary School better. Children appreciate and value these opportunities. Across the school, staff are now undertaking activities which help them become aware of national expectations. They have a clearer understanding of their strengths and the areas which they need to improve. They are passionate about improving children's experiences within and beyond the school. There are now rigorous processes in place to monitor the work of the school and children's experiences. There has been a particular focus on improving learning and teaching across the school. An example of this is the evidence around the school of consistent approaches to learning and teaching. We have asked that staff keep this new development under review to ensure that it continues to have the desired impact. As recognised by the school there remains a significant number of improvements still required in the nursery class. It is important that staff and partners work together to help bring about necessary improvements.

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. North Lanarkshire 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

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