

19 December 2017

Dear Parent/Carer

**Edinburgh Secure Services
The City of Edinburgh Council**

In October 2015, HM Inspectors published a report on your child's school. The report set out a number of areas for improvement which we agreed with the school and The City of Edinburgh Council. We subsequently returned to the school to look at how it had continued to improve its work, and published another letter in November 2016. Recently, as you may know, we visited the school again. During our visit, we talked to young people 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 young people's learning and achievements. This letter sets out what we found.

Improve young people's learning experiences by taking a more rigorous approach to monitoring learning and teaching and tracking young people's progress.

Overall, the quality of learners' experiences continues to improve across the whole school. Teachers are consistently providing more stimulating, interesting tasks and activities leading to young people being increasingly engaged and motivated to learn in most classes. Young people have more variety and choice during the school day helping sustain their motivation. Staff should continue to raise their expectations of what young people can achieve. In a few classes, young people would benefit from increased challenge and a brisker pace of learning. Senior leaders have embedded formal monitoring of the quality of learning and teaching with clear feedback provided to teachers. Teachers have continued to try to discover ways of successfully tracking young people's progress both at the broad general education and senior phase. They now need to identify and develop approaches which are more suited to the unique context of the school.

Improve young people's attainment and achievement and approaches to identifying young people's needs.

At the senior phase, a number of young people continue to achieve National Qualifications in English. An increasing number of young people are now gaining course awards in Lifeskills Maths. Young people also achieve units in a number of curricular areas including science, art, social subjects, practical cookery and music. The school should continue to strive to raise attainment and achievement for all young people. In order to improve information sharing at the start of any placement, the

school has introduced a key teacher system and an information checklist to support young people's transition into the school. Teachers have more information about young people's learning needs at point of entry and this improves their capacity to have effective education plans in place. The school now needs to review their approaches to identifying and meeting the wellbeing needs of young people.

Develop the curriculum in line with national guidance.

The school week offers young people far more variety, personalisation and choice across most curricular areas. For example increased staffing has seen the re-introduction of music and craft and design technology. At the senior phase, young people are now able to access a wider range of qualifications including new programmes and courses at National 3, 4 and 5. The school needs to continue to develop the curriculum in line with national advice and guidance including literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing.

Provide more opportunities to ensure young people have a voice in improving the service.

The school continues to ensure consultation takes place with young people on a regular basis to gain their views on their learning experiences and the school as a whole. A pupil council is now well established which at present involves all young people. The pupil council meet on a regular basis, record a minute and contribute towards many areas of school life. The school now needs to ensure that young people see how their ideas impact upon school improvement.

Improve leadership at all levels and further develop collaborative working between care and education.

Despite a period of continuous change and upheaval, senior leaders have been successful in continuing to build a positive school culture based on effective teamwork and positive relationships. Staff feel valued and are very complimentary about the level of support they have received in recent times notably the range of opportunities for career-long professional development. Edinburgh Secure Services continues to have a high quality improvement plan in place which is monitored and reviewed on a regular basis. Education staff are working collectively to take forward these priorities and working groups continue to be led by staff at all levels. Greater emphasis now needs to be placed on measuring the impact of change particularly in relation to improving outcomes for young people. Relationships between care and education staff have improved significantly since the last inspection. There is mutual trust and respect amongst staff and a clearer understanding of individual roles and responsibilities. Aided by the effective residential care officer based in education, there is a marked improvement in information sharing between care and education staff.

What happens next?

The school has made some progress since the original inspection. We will ask for a report on progress within one year 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 City of Edinburgh Council that we intend to take.

Steven McPherson
HM Inspector

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 0131 244 4330, 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.