

28 August 2018

Dear Parent/Carer

**Fenwick Primary School  
East Ayrshire Council**

In August 2017, 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 East Ayrshire 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.

**In order to raise attainment and achievement for all, the school should use its three-year strategic plan to improve all areas of the curriculum.**

The school has improved its strategic planning, with strong leadership from the headteacher and a clear focus on raising attainment and achievement. Staff are beginning to adopt more effective and reliable approaches to evaluating the work of the school. They are developing a more accurate picture of the school's performance and the quality of the curriculum. The headteacher has supported staff well in creating stronger ways to plan for improvement and monitor the work of the school. Teachers and classroom assistants have benefited from high quality professional learning opportunities, and the majority have responded well to these experiences. The school has begun to improve programmes in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing, with strong support from the local authority. The Parent Council has also played a significant role in helping the school to move forwards. The headteacher should continue to work with all staff to ensure their full commitment to improvement in the school. The school now benefits from a clear sense of direction and effective quality improvement processes. However, more work remains to be done to improve aspects of the curriculum. Staff should build on the positive developments made to improve children's experiences in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. All other areas of the curriculum should be developed to provide children with high quality Broad General Education (BGE).

**Develop staff's skills in tracking and monitoring of children's progress, making effective use of all relevant data.**

Teachers' skills in tracking and monitoring children's progress are improving. Staff now share a clearer understanding of what is expected and are becoming more confident using the new approaches. They are now tracking children's progress in literacy and numeracy more effectively, using resources provided by the local authority. Whilst it is too early to judge the full impact on children's attainment and achievement, it is clear that children are becoming more confident in their learning. Teachers are developing their skills in using a range of assessment information to inform their evaluation of children's attainment. They are beginning to make more accurate predictions on attainment levels for individual children. It will remain important that approaches to monitoring and tracking children's progress are consistently applied across all stages of the school. Children will benefit from more purposeful conversations about their learning and how well they are making progress towards individual targets. We have asked that the school address the concerns of some parents to improve communications with them, including more specific information on children's progress.

**Improve learning, teaching and assessment as a priority, ensuring an appropriate level of pace and challenge for all.**

There are improvements to the quality of children's learning in the majority of classes. Children benefit most from lessons when staff manage time well, keep a brisk pace to learning and ensure that tasks meet children's different needs effectively. With strong leadership from the headteacher, staff have been encouraged to reflect more on the quality of their practice in teaching and assessment. Working closely with the local authority, the headteacher has supported staff in developing their skills through professional learning. However, in a few lessons, staff talk for too long and lose children's interest. Lessons are not yet consistently well designed to ensure levels of challenge and support are appropriate for each individual child. Classroom assistants play an important part in supporting children's learning, at times contributing specialist skills in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. The majority of teachers have achieved important progress in improving the effectiveness of their assessment approaches. They now need to refine, further, the accuracy with which they judge children's achievement of a Curriculum for Excellence level. Almost all children behave very well and relate well to their classmates. However, we have asked the school to continue to develop and build positive relationships between pupils, to address concerns raised by a few children and parents.

**Develop leadership across the school, particularly through the roles of class teachers and the contribution of children.**

The headteacher has encouraged teachers and support staff to take on leadership roles, for example to improve aspects of the curriculum. Most teachers are beginning to lead improvements in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. Support staff make valuable contributions, taking a lead in specific aspects of supporting children. Children enhance their leadership skills through class and whole-school duties, for example as P7 buddies for children in P1, as house

captains, or as Junior Road Safety Officers. Commendably, the school now involves all children in the work of one of its pupil committees, developing their skills as effective contributors and responsible citizens. Staff recognise the potential for children to lead important aspects of learning, for example through the 'masterclass' approach, in digital learning.

### **What happens next?**

The school has clearly made progress since the original inspection. We will liaise with East Ayrshire Council regarding the school's capacity to improve. We will return to carry out a further inspection of the school within 18 months of the publication of this letter. We will discuss the details of this inspection with East Ayrshire Council. When we return to inspect the school we will write to you as parents, informing you of the progress the school has made.

Dennise Sommerville  
HM Inspector

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