

5 June 2018

Dear Parent/Carer

**St John Vianney RC Primary School
The City of Edinburgh Council**

In April 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 The City of Edinburgh 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.

Improve the strategic leadership of continuous improvement and ensure staff, parents, partners and children are fully involved in evaluating the work of the school and nursery effectively

The nursery team has begun to review its vision, values and aims alongside the work done in the primary school. Practitioners are making progress in developing their approach to self-evaluation. They are beginning to build their confidence in using national practice guidance to support this work and evaluate their own provision. This has led to initial improvements in the nursery environment. Practitioners should continue to build on this positive start with increasing rigour and a stronger focus on children's learning.

Under the leadership of the acting headteacher, the school has developed a thorough and well-considered approach to address the improvements identified in the previous inspection report. This has engaged children, parents and staff effectively to develop a shared vision for positive change. Overall, there is a clear sense of motivation and commitment to improvement throughout the school community. Teachers are working together more confidently to develop and evaluate their practice further. A number of groups, which are led by children or parents, have been established to provide additional contexts for learning and take forward aspects of school improvement. We have asked the school to further develop the role of stakeholders so that they are fully involved in evaluating progress with school improvement. We have also asked teachers to ensure that steps taken to improve the school result in better outcomes for all children.

Improve consistency in high quality learning and teaching and the effectiveness of assessment leading to raising attainment and achievement for all children

In the nursery setting, improvements have been made to the learning resources, and use of the playroom and garden, to raise the quality of children's learning experiences. Practitioners have adapted the structure of the session to allow children more time to follow their own interests and direct their play. Recently introduced online learning journal systems are supporting practitioners to build on their observation skills and promote discussion. We have asked practitioners to ensure that journals reflect individual children's learning and the progress they are making over time. Practitioners should continue to reflect on high quality learning and teaching to ensure its consistency across the setting.

Across the school, teachers have developed a learning and teaching toolkit, which is supporting a shared understanding of effective practice. Methods for sharing practice, such as trios and learning walks, are being established and are used regularly. As a result, there are shared strategies being developed which are beginning to be used more consistently by teachers. The effectiveness of these shared strategies should be evaluated to ensure that they are used consistently, purposefully and appropriately to support learning. Through working with national benchmarks and moderation activities, teachers are gaining confidence in assessing children's progress in learning in relation to national expectations. We have asked them to work with children to make more effective use of target-setting to support children's learning.

Improve children's achievements in health and wellbeing and promote equalities

Work has begun in the nursery setting to evaluate the continuity of learning across the early level and to share a play-based approach. Children are developing their independence through making choices about their play and daily routines. They are also developing confidence in getting ready for outdoor play and looking after the nursery environment. Children are making regular visits to the primary one class earlier in the school session to support pastoral transitions and help them become familiar with the school. Practitioners should consider opportunities for children to contribute to, and take a lead in, their learning with more depth. There is potential to explore and celebrate further the range of languages and cultures within the nursery to enhance children's learning.

The school leadership team has developed a strategic approach to improve wellbeing across the school community and involve stakeholders more effectively. This is connecting various aspects of the work of the school to provide more considered and coherent support to children across all stages. There is a growing number of opportunities for children to take leadership roles, for example, house captains, class consultations and pupil leadership groups. This is helping to build an increased confidence and sense of pride in the school. The school's commitment to inclusion and celebrating diversity is evident across the school environment and in the work of the school. Senior leaders are aware of the need to make the use of health and wellbeing indicators more explicit across the school. This will help to

develop a shared vocabulary to raise awareness and support more regular discussion with, and between, children about their wellbeing.

Further aspects of school improvement

Significant work has been undertaken to meet child protection requirements. We have agreed that the headteacher will ensure that a system is in place to verify that all staff training with regard to child protection and safeguarding is monitored and regularly updated.

What happens next?

The school has made progress since the original inspection. We will ask for a report on further 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.

David Drysdale
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.