

22 January 2019

Dear Parent/Carer

In November 2018, a team of inspectors from Education Scotland visited Aberchirder Primary School and Nursery Class. During our visit, we talked to parents/carers and children and worked closely with the headteacher and staff.

The inspection team found the following strengths in the school's work.

- The acting headteacher is providing effective leadership to establish some stability and direction for the school. As a result staff, children and parents are increasingly willing to accept more responsibility in working together to improve the school.
- There is a sound basis of partnership working with the community. This is providing a wide range of relevant learning experiences for children across different contexts for learning.
- Staff demonstrate a commitment to the welfare and inclusion of children who require support with particular needs. This is improving learning for these children and helping to develop their wider skills.

The following areas for improvement were identified and discussed with the headteacher and a representative from Aberdeenshire Council.

- The acting headteacher should engage all members of the school community to fully develop the vision, values and aims for the school and nursery setting. This should include clear agreement on children's rights and inform the rationale for the curriculum. She should develop a strategic plan to co-ordinate everyone to work together on the agreed priorities for improvement.
- Teachers and early years practitioners should review their approaches to learning, teaching and assessment to ensure that children make the best possible progress in their learning. They need to make effective use of an appropriate range of information about children's progress and work together, and with colleagues from other schools and settings, to develop confidence in evaluating children's success.
- Across the school and nursery setting, staff need to ensure that they are fully aware of their responsibilities in relation to '*Getting it right for every child*' and that these inform every aspect of their practice. Ensure a clear focus on ensuring wellbeing entitlements for all children and ensure that they are supported to maximise their successes and achievements. Children should have a clearer voice in helping to plan and evaluate approaches to improving their wellbeing.
- As a matter of priority, improve the attainment and achievement of all children in the school and nursery setting. Teachers and practitioners should fully develop a detailed understanding of children's progress in learning through tracking and monitoring. Through this they should identify, and take action to remove, any barriers that children may have to their learning.

We gathered evidence to enable us to evaluate the school's work using four quality indicators from [How good is our school? \(4th edition\)](#) and [How good is our early learning and childcare?](#) Quality indicators help schools, local authorities and inspectors to judge what is working well and what needs to be improved. Following the inspection of each school, the Scottish Government gathers details of our evaluations to keep track of how well Scottish schools are doing.

Here are Education Scotland's evaluations for Aberchirder Primary School and Nursery Class

Quality indicators for the primary stages	Evaluation
Leadership of change	weak
Learning, teaching and assessment	weak
Raising attainment and achievement	weak
Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion	weak
Descriptions of the evaluations are available from: How good is our school? (4th edition), Appendix 3: The six-point scale	

Quality indicators for the nursery class	Evaluation
Leadership of change	weak
Learning, teaching and assessment	weak
Securing children's progress	satisfactory
Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion	satisfactory
Descriptions of the evaluations are available from: How good is our early learning and childcare? Appendix 1: The six-point scale	

A more detailed document called Summarised Inspection Findings (SIF) will be available on the Education Scotland website at:

<https://education.gov.scot/inspection-reports/aberdeenshire/5212227>

What happens next?

As a result of our inspection findings we think that the school and setting needs additional support and more time to make necessary improvements. We will liaise with Aberdeenshire Council regarding the school's capacity to improve. We will return to carry out a further inspection of the school within one year of the publication of this letter. We will discuss with Aberdeenshire Council the details of this inspection. When we return to inspect the school we will write to you as parents/carers informing you of the progress the school has made.

David Drysdale
HM Inspector