

16 May 2023

Dear Parent/Carer

In February 2023, a team of inspectors from Education Scotland visited St Combs School. 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 strong sense of belonging that children have and the very positive relationships within the school. Children, parents, staff and members of the local community are a valued part of the school. They are proud of their heritage, Doric dialect and culture.
- The staff team, who work together very well. They help each other to improve their professional skills and abilities and willingly share their knowledge.
- The Parent Council and wider parent body who are highly supportive and play an active role in the school. They work effectively with the headteacher and all staff to improve children's experiences.

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

- Provide children with more opportunities to lead and influence change across the school. Staff should resume children's leadership groups and committees as soon as possible.
- Teachers should develop universal approaches to meeting the needs of all learners. All staff would benefit from further professional learning in supporting children's individual needs.
- All staff should continue to develop a shared understanding of high-quality learning, teaching and assessment. Teachers should ensure that experiences are well matched to children's needs and interests.
- Support children to understand and articulate the skills for learning, life and work they are developing.

We gathered evidence to enable us to evaluate the school's work using four quality indicators from [How good is our school? \(4th edition\)](#). 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 St Combs School

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

A more detailed document called Summarised Inspection Findings (SIF) will be available on the Education Scotland website at: [Reports page | Inspection reports | Education Scotland](#)

What happens next?

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. Aberdeenshire Council will inform parents/carers about the school's progress as part of its arrangements for reporting on the quality of its schools.

Helen Mulholland
HM Inspector