

30 July 2024

Dear Parent/Carer

In May 2023, HM Inspectors published a letter on Rossie Young People's Trust. The letter set out a number of areas for improvement which we agreed with the school and The Board of Governors. Recently, as you may know, we visited the school again. During our visit, we talked to children and 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 children and young people's learning and achievements. This letter sets out what we found.

Review the school day to ensure all children and young people access a curriculum which meets their needs better.

Senior leaders and staff have reviewed the length of the school day. As a result, all young people attending the school are now able to access a full-time timetable. However, a few young people attend school on a part-time basis. Teachers provide learning programmes to young people attending school on a part-time basis in their care home settings. Senior leaders and staff need to continue to design learning programmes, which support all children and young people to engage in their learning full time.

Senior leaders have made important improvements to the learning environment since the original inspection. Children and young people now have access to a multi-purpose fitness suite and a wider range of digital equipment. A new secure forest school is under development. This has the potential to provide young people with valuable learning experiences. Senior leaders and staff should continue to develop the outdoor space to ensure all learners can access opportunities for learning within a wide range of contexts, including learning outdoors.

Senior leaders and staff have developed a new, high quality curriculum rationale closely aligned to Rossie's vision and values, and the unique context of the school. Senior leaders and staff now need to develop the school's curriculum further with a view to achieving the goals highlighted within the rationale. Since the last inspection, senior leaders and staff have made some progress in developing the curriculum. Children and young people are being offered a wider range of opportunities, including learning which uses links across different subjects. Children and young people are engaging increasingly well in learning activities such as hospitality and the Coffee La Rossie initiative. However, a number of these curriculum developments remain at an early stage especially in relation to literacy and English. Senior leaders and staff should continue to develop the curriculum further particularly at the broad general education. In doing so, they should increase opportunities for children and young people to have greater choice in what, and how they learn.

From January 2024 to March 2024, the school was subject to a significant staff shortage which impacted upon the delivery of children and young people's learning. This resulted in all children and young people receiving part-time learning programmes for a sustained period of

time. Teachers offered a small range of additional activities during this time, but with limited success. Children and young people's school attendance and engagement in learning were negatively impacted during this time. Senior leaders should ensure with immediate effect that plans are in place to prevent any disruption to children and young people's learning in case of any similar future event.

Develop high quality learning and teaching which engages children and young people more effectively in their learning and promotes increased attendance.

There is now an increased sense of calm and purpose around the school. This can be seen in how children and young people move to and from school and between classes. Teachers warmly welcome each child or young person into their lessons. Senior leaders should continue to review daily timetabling in partnership with children and young people and staff. This should have a focus on ensuring children and young people remain motivated throughout the school day.

The quality of learning and teaching has improved across the school. In most classes, teachers are using a wider range of approaches to help motivate and engage children and young people in their learning. The majority of children and young people engage purposefully in learning activities closely linked to their interests and real-life contexts. Teachers are beginning to use digital technology more effectively to enhance children and young people's learning experiences. The use of digital technology is not yet a strong feature across the school. Teachers need to continue to develop their use of digital technology, with an increased focus on supporting children and young people to take greater responsibility for their own learning. Teachers should continue to reduce their reliance on the use of worksheets and textbooks in lessons.

There has been a small improvement in children and young people's attendance since the last inspection. However, overall, children and young people's attendance continues to be an area for improvement. Senior leaders and staff should continue to identify and adopt a wider range of creative approaches to support all disengaged learners to be motivated to attend school.

Improve how teachers plan and check that children and young people are making improved progress in their learning.

Teachers have recently introduced new guidance to support how they check children and young people are making progress. This new guidance is now helping teachers to develop a consistent approach across the school to how information on each child or young person is collated. Teachers use this effectively to evaluate how well each child or young person is progressing in their class. They are beginning to use the information they gather to have discussions with children and young people about their progress. This is helping children and young people to reflect on what they are doing well and where they could improve their learning. Senior leaders should continue to support teachers to ensure this process continues to lead to improvements in children and young people's progress.

Senior leaders have begun to hold raising attainment meetings with teachers. These meetings are beginning to prove useful in helping teachers to develop their skills in evaluating children and young people's progress. As a result, teachers are developing their

understanding of how they can plan lessons, which will support improvements in children and young people's engagement in their learning. Teachers are not yet using the information discussed at raising attainment meetings well enough to inform how they plan for children and young people's next steps in their learning. Senior leaders need to support staff to develop how they use the information from raising attainment meetings to plan learning, which leads to improvements in children and young people's attainment.

What happens next?

The school has made some progress since the original inspection. However, there remain important aspects where further progress is required. We will liaise with The Board of Governors 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 The Board of Governors the details of this inspection. When we return to inspect the school we will write to you as parents informing you of the progress the school has made.

Graeme Gordon
HM Inspector