

23 April 2024

Dear Parent/Carer

In February 2024, a team of inspectors from Education Scotland visited Cockburnspath Primary School and Early Learning and Childcare (ELC). 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 and ELC's work.

- The polite, friendly children in the school and ELC who are eager to learn and experience success.
- Effective teamwork by all staff in the school, ELC and with partners to promote positive relationships and support children's wellbeing. This approach is helping to create a nurturing, inclusive learning environment.
- In the ELC, the leadership of the senior practitioner who works very well with a skilled team to create high-quality experiences for all children. Children in the ELC are making very good progress in their learning. They are happy, confident, curious and engaged in their play.

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

- Improve approaches to leadership of change within the school, creating a stronger culture of self-evaluation to inform and plan improvements. This will help secure better outcomes for all children.
- Improve approaches to planning and assessment within the school. This will help ensure reliable evidence is gathered about children's progress and used effectively to plan for children's learning.
- Continue to develop approaches to promoting and supporting positive relationships and behaviour across the school.
- Improve children's attainment in literacy and numeracy within the school, targeting gaps in children's learning to ensure all children make the best possible progress.

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 Cockburnspath Primary School and Early Learning and Childcare

Quality indicators for the primary stages	Evaluation
Leadership of change	weak
Learning, teaching and assessment	satisfactory
Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion	satisfactory
Raising attainment and achievement	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	good
Learning, teaching and assessment	very good
Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion	very good
Securing children's progress	very good
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: [Details | Find an inspection report | Find an inspection report | Inspection and Review | Education Scotland](#)

What happens next?

As a result of our inspection findings we think that the school needs additional support and more time to make necessary improvements. We will liaise with Scottish Borders Council regarding the school's capacity to improve. We will return to carry out a further inspection of the school within 12 months of the publication of this letter. We will discuss with Scottish Borders 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.

Robyn McIlroy
HM Inspector