

24 June 2025

Dear Parent/Carer

In June 2024, HM Inspectors published a letter on Kelloholm Primary School. The letter set out a number of areas for improvement which we agreed with the school and Dumfries and Galloway 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 and at other aspects of the school's work, as proposed by the headteacher. 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.

**There is a significant need to improve leadership of change at all levels to improve learner outcomes. This should include involving staff, children, parents and partners in planning and evaluating the impact of improvement priorities.**

Senior leaders and staff have made strong progress in addressing this area of priority.

The headteacher is driven to secure positive outcomes for all children. She has developed a clear vision and direction for the school. Senior leaders have improved their approaches to monitoring and evaluating the work of the school. They regularly ask children and parents for their views to help make improvements. They will continue to refine these approaches to ensure that they gather ongoing evidence of the impact of change on children. This will help to inform their next steps in improvement.

Staff at all levels are now leading change successfully across the school. A range of approaches are supporting improved outcomes for children. These include developing children's writing skills and improving what children learn to ensure it is interesting, relevant and builds on previous learning. Staff have introduced a helpful daily wellbeing check in with children to review their feelings and emotions. They are using this information to provide support to children to ensure they feel safe, included and ready to learn.

Children have also benefited from lots of opportunities for leadership. For example, children act as buddies to help their peers during interval and lunch time and a few children led the 'Eat Them to Defeat Them' competition to get more children eating healthy fruit and vegetables. The eco council is helping children learn about the environment by ensuring children recycle, water plants and discourage littering in the school and local community.

**Senior leaders and staff should continue to improve the quality of learning, teaching and assessment across the school. This should ensure children experience increased pace in lessons and learning which is planned at the right level of difficulty to better meet their needs.**

Senior leaders and staff have made positive progress in addressing this area of priority.

Teachers have taken up professional learning opportunities focused on improving learning, teaching and assessment. They work together well to share and develop good practice. Teachers worked together and created a new whole-school learning and teaching policy. This is leading to greater consistency in the classroom routines children experience.

Teachers now share the purpose of learning and measures of success regularly with children. They are helping children to identify and reflect on individual learning targets. This helps children to understand their progress in learning better. Teachers use questioning techniques well to support children to reflect on their learning. They encourage children to offer feedback to their peers. This helps children to reflect on their progress in learning.

Teachers continue to improve the quality of the lessons they offer children. This is helping to keep children motivated and interested in learning. For example, children enjoy well-planned opportunities for outdoor learning. As a next step, teachers should continue to develop opportunities for children to lead aspects of their learning more often.

**Senior leaders and staff should raise the attainment of children, with a focus on improving children's success in literacy and numeracy.**

Senior leaders and staff have made sufficient progress in addressing this area of priority.

There are early indications that teachers' work to improve learning, teaching and assessment is supporting raised attainment. A few teachers are developing successfully their approaches to teaching and assessing writing. This is helping children to improve their writing skills. Teachers need to share their learning in this area with colleagues to ensure this effective approach is used across the school.

Children are benefiting from learning in numeracy which is related to real-life situations. For example, children use their budgeting skills well for events such as the Christmas market. Teachers should continue to improve their approaches to teaching numeracy. Children require more support to develop their mental maths strategies to help to secure their understanding of numeracy facts.

The headteacher has worked with the local authority to improve the school's approaches to monitoring the progress of children across the school. As this approach is embedded, staff will be better able to track the progress of individual and groups of learners. There is a need to improve further the approaches staff use to track the progress of children who require additional support in their learning.

**Senior leaders and staff should continue to explore ways to encourage parents to participate more fully in all aspects of the life of the school.**

Staff have made steady progress with this priority area.

Parents value the use of a digital application to share information about children's learning and achievements. They like being able to contact teachers directly to share children's achievements outside of school and to ask questions. They appreciate how well teachers know their children and find staff to be approachable and friendly.

Staff have organised a range of events to involve parents in the life of the school. This includes well-attended charity and fundraising events. The local community recognise the important position of the school in the village and value the chance to come together for these events. Parents appreciate opportunities to be involved in their child's learning, such as through class assemblies, play and stay sessions and an outdoor learning day. A few family learning events have supported parents and children to develop their digital and cookery skills.

The headteacher regularly seeks the views of parents to support planning for improvements and changes to the school. She often gets a limited response to requests for parents' views. She needs to continue to explore the best ways to reach more parents. Parents should also be supported to understand the important role they can play in guiding how the school can continue to improve. The upcoming celebration of the school's centenary is a strong starting point for developing this partnership working. The headteacher also recognises the need to work with parents to develop the role of the Parent Council further, to ensure they have a more active role in supporting school improvements.

### What happens next?

The school has made good progress since the original inspection. 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. Dumfries and Galloway Council will inform parents about the school's progress as part of its arrangements for reporting on the quality of its schools.

Graham Parry  
HM Inspector