

21 March 2017

Dear Parent/Carer

**Kingspark School  
Dundee City Council**

In September 2014, HM Inspectors published a letter on your child's school. The letter set out a number of areas for improvement which we agreed with the school and Dundee City Council. We subsequently returned to the school to look at how it had continued to improve its work, and published another letter in September 2015. 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's/young people's learning and achievements. This letter sets out what we found.

**Improve the curriculum in line with Curriculum for Excellence guidance.**

The school has made significant progress in all aspects of its curriculum development in the primary and secondary departments and in the enhanced support area (ESA). The design of the curriculum now reflects more clearly the principles of Curriculum for Excellence. Staff are planning consistently to meet children's and young people's learning and care needs using the experiences and outcomes within the broad general education. The school has developed a useful skills framework identifying expectations in the sensory room and the soft play room. This is helping staff to evidence more clearly learner's progress. The school is committed to ensuring it involves all of its partners, including parents and learners, in its planned review of the curriculum.

The school has increased opportunities for young people in the senior phase to demonstrate achievements and attainment over time. Young people are now achieving a wider variety of National Qualifications at Levels 1 and 2, and personal achievement awards including Dynamic Youth, Scottish Studies and John Muir Awards. Staff plan to further increase opportunities to achieve awards for children at the primary stages and in the ESA.

**In order to meet the learning needs of children and young people more effectively, improve the skills of staff through a range of professional learning opportunities.**

Across the school, all staff and partner agencies are building their professional skills and competencies well through the school's extensive professional learning programme. Staff regularly share good practice and select from a wide range of courses including 'total communication', managing teams effectively and using videos to capture evidence of progress. Allied health professionals working in the community NHS clinic provide additional support for staff by offering specialist professional learning programmes. These include personal care, postural movement, sensory learning and speech and communication. The school is developing a nurturing environment for learners, parents and staff using the "How Nurturing is Our School" framework. Staff and parents told HM inspectors that this is helping staff to provide a calm and supportive learning environment across the school. The school should continue to develop its approaches to matching tasks and activities more effectively to individual needs.

**Develop a more rigorous approach to self-evaluation, including the effective use of information, with a clear focus on improving outcomes in relation to care, welfare and wellbeing for children and young people.**

All managers and staff at Kingspark School share a strong commitment to improving outcomes for children and young people. Self-evaluation processes across the school are now comprehensive, robust and well understood by all staff and partners. The school has worked hard to develop more rigorous safeguarding procedures and reviews the impact of these regularly. There is a strong focus on ensuring the wellbeing of children and young people supported by professional development for all staff. This has led to established and well understood routines and the effective use of visual schedules to support learners to become more independent. The school is developing effective approaches to "open voice" dialogue with learners, parents, partners and staff to drive improvements. Along with health partners, the school should ensure that the health partnership agreement is now successfully implemented.

**Improve leadership at all levels.**

Since the inspection of June 2014, the school has made significant improvements to the quality of leadership at all levels. There is now clear evidence of the impact of these changes in a range of areas. These include the calm ethos and nurturing culture of the school, improved communication at all levels, higher expectations of staff, children and young people and a clearer focus on learning and teaching and keeping children safe. All staff spoke highly of the school's mentoring programme for all new staff. Frequent opportunities for staff to meet in departments and reflect on their practice with key partners in health and care have led to notable improvements. These include improved communication between managers and staff, and a prompt response to any concerns raised by staff and parents. There is also more collaborative working in classrooms, across departments and with care staff, health professionals and partners in the local community and beyond. The

school should continue to increase opportunities for teachers to lead and chair working groups and encourage parental involvement in aspects of school life.

### **What happens next?**

The school has made very 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. Dundee City Council will inform parents about the school's progress as part of its arrangements for reporting on the quality of its schools.

Dr Kate Hannah  
HM Inspector

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