

26 February 2019

Dear Parent/Carer

In November 2017, HM Inspectors published a letter following an inspection of Braehead Primary School and Early Years Centre. The letter set out a number of areas for improvement which we agreed with the school and South Ayrshire 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. 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. The Care Inspectorate inspected the early years centre at the same time and the report will be available at [www.careinspectorate.com](http://www.careinspectorate.com).

**Area for Improvement 1 - As the school moves forward, there is a need for the senior leadership team of the school to provide clear direction to manage the changes needed to improve outcomes for all children.**

The acting senior leadership team has brought much needed direction and improvement across the school community. The acting headteacher has worked effectively with staff to establish priorities for action and as a result, there is now a clearer shared understanding of what needs to be achieved. This provides helpful and supportive guidance for the continuous improvement of Braehead Primary School.

Children are beginning to take a more active role in leading their own learning. They enjoy having opportunities to discuss with staff what they know and what they would like to learn. They are becoming more involved in helping with planning their own learning. Staff value the trust and confidence the acting senior leadership team have placed in them to take forward school improvement.

A Parent Council was established in January 2018. It is beginning to work closely with school staff to support improvements, and organise social events such as school discos. Moving forward, there is scope for the Parent Council to take a more active role in self-evaluation processes to support the improvement agenda. This should include improving communication to parents and more helpful information on how children progress in their learning.

**Area for Improvement 2 - The school should develop a curriculum that is relevant to its context, meets the needs of all learners and supports children to develop knowledge and skills across all curriculum areas.**

The pace of change in the curriculum has been well managed by the acting senior leadership team. They have made positive progress in developing a shared understanding of what the school wants to achieve through its curriculum. All staff have worked together to produce a shared curriculum rationale which takes account of national advice and local circumstances. Consultation has taken place recently with stakeholders about the school's vision, values, and assets. Staff should continue to review how assessment is linked to learning and

teaching. This will help ensure that progressive learning experiences for children continue to be developed within and across all curricular areas.

Teachers are now planning more interesting lessons. There are now clearer learning pathways which allow children to build on their prior learning. A skills progression has been created across the curriculum, and children are better aware of the importance of developing skills as well as knowledge and understanding. This is beginning to help them understand the skills they are learning and how they can be applied in learning, life and work.

In moving forward, children should be encouraged to reflect regularly on their learning and set appropriate targets for their next steps. They need to be given opportunities to talk about their learning and how to achieve success. Parents should be given further opportunities to be involved in supporting their children's learning.

The school is in a good place to develop further and continue to improve the curriculum.

**Area for Improvement 3 - There is a need to improve learning and teaching and ensure there is appropriate pace and challenge for all. This should be supported by a review of the positive behaviour policy to enable children to engage fully in learning and have high aspirations for the future.**

Overall, the learning and teaching experiences of children have improved since the original inspection. The school environment promotes a more positive ethos for learning and children enjoy their learning more. Across the school, most children are actively engaged in their learning. They have regular opportunities to discuss and share ideas and demonstrate a good level of cooperation when working with others. Teachers have higher expectations of what children are capable of achieving.

Overall, children's behaviour and their attitudes towards their learning are now much improved. They are much more respectful to each other, to adults and visitors to the school. Opportunities for learning have improved as a result of a focus on improving behaviour across the school. The '1,2,3 Magic' approach is helping children earn rewards for positive behaviour and understand the impact of disruptive behaviour. Children are very positive about this approach and say that it has resulted in better behaviour.

Children have responded well to early opportunities to participate and lead on whole school initiatives such as Rights Respecting Schools (RRS), pupil council, Dyslexia Friendly Schools (DFS), and Outdoor Learning. They are enthusiastic about what they hope to achieve.

While pace and challenge in learning have improved, these are not yet consistent across the school. Staff should now increase pace further through tasks and activities which are more appropriately challenging and which give children more responsibility for their learning. This will support further development of independent learning skills.

The school is well-placed to continue to develop more consistent high-quality learning experiences across all classes.

**Area for Improvement 4 - Building on children's good progress in learning in the early years centre, staff should work to raise the attainment and achievement of all children. Approaches to assessment need to be improved to meet children's needs better.**

Within the early years centre, the system to record children's progress in literacy and numeracy has been revised. Children's progress is recorded in individual profiles on electronic tablets and shared with parents. Practitioners now need to continue to develop further how to monitor and evaluate children's progress in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. The next steps in learning should be shared with children in order for them to improve their ability to talk about their learning, in particular the key skills they are developing. Parents should be key partners in this process so they are aware where their children are in their learning and how they can better support them.

Since the last inspection, significant work has been undertaken across the primary stages to improve the way assessment data is gathered, tracked, and analysed. The acting senior leadership team has led the development of an appropriate system to track and monitor the attainment and achievement of all children. Children's progress in the key areas of literacy, numeracy, health and wellbeing is tracked and monitored regularly. Support staff play a valuable role in working with children to improve their learning.

Overall, there is an improving picture in respect of children's attainment. In literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing children are making progress from their prior levels of attainment. However, HM Inspectors agree with the school that there is scope to develop this further.

**Area for Improvement 5 - Develop more effective self-evaluation approaches which lead to improved outcomes in the early years centre and across the school**

Approaches to self-evaluation have improved across the early years centre and primary classes. All staff demonstrate a strong commitment to improving the work of the school and are actively involved in the improvement journey. The acting senior leadership team has enabled staff to work more effectively as a team across the school. They now plan and evaluate their work together in a more focused way.

Staff have undertaken significant professional learning activities and this is resulting in improvements in learning, teaching and assessment. Children are becoming more involved in their learning and feel that they have a greater voice in the school. Staff have worked with colleagues from other schools to increase their own understanding of standards and expectations for their learners.

Approaches to monitoring and tracking children's progress are now more robust and are leading to improvements in children's learning. We have asked staff to now ensure that all self-evaluation activity focuses on the impact on children's learning.

The acting headteacher continues to provide clear and focussed leadership and, as a result there is evidence of positive improvement across the school.

### What happens next?

The school has taken positive steps and made progress in each of the areas for improvement identified in the original inspection. There is still more work to be carried out to achieve all of what has been agreed as areas for improvement. We will liaise with South Ayrshire Council 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 South Ayrshire Council 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.

Dennise Sommerville  
HM Inspector