

28 February 2017

Dear Parent/Carer

**Keith Grammar School  
The Moray Council**

In November 2015, 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 The Moray Council. Recently, as you may know, we visited the school again. During our visit, we talked to 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 young people's learning and achievements. This letter sets out what we found.

**Improve the curriculum to ensure all young people can make the best possible progress in their learning.**

Staff are continuing to make important improvements to the curriculum to support young people to make better progress in their learning. The school has reviewed interdisciplinary learning in S1 and S2 with the aim of providing more opportunities for young people to apply their knowledge and develop skills for life and work. New courses are available in S3 in areas such as science, modern languages and technology. Young people now have the opportunity to experience learning to an appropriate level in all areas of the curriculum. This is providing a wider range of pathways into S4 and courses leading to qualifications. Challenge courses have been introduced to enhance learning, including in literacy and numeracy. However, the school needs to review the literacy programme to ensure it provides sufficient challenge for all young people. The school provides a suitably wide range of courses in the senior phase from S4 to S6. Staff continue to work with partners such as Skills Development Scotland to support young people in finding the most appropriate choice of courses to develop their personal attributes and interests. Young people are now more engaged with a life skills programme which is providing increased relevance and depth to their learning. We have asked the school to continue with work to evaluate the curriculum to ensure that there is appropriate pace and challenge for all young people.

**Develop the monitoring and tracking of young people's progress, including involving young people in regular conversations about their learning.**

The school has now developed a comprehensive system for monitoring and tracking the progress of all young people in their learning. Although some aspects of this work are at the early stages, teachers are already being provided with useful information to support planning of appropriate learning opportunities. Staff have taken forward work on assessment to ensure that information on the progress of learners is reliable. Last session, teachers planned individual support for those young people at risk of not achieving in their qualifications. Young people are positive about these interventions which they told us helped them to succeed. The more integrated pupil support team is now using a variety of approaches to improve how it meets the needs of young people, including those requiring additional support. They work together effectively to identify, and act to resolve, any barriers young people may have in their learning. Helpful information on strategies to support learners requiring additional support is now shared with teachers across the school. The universal support period (UPS) provides an opportunity for learners to discuss their overall progress with a teacher. However, some young people told us they have not yet had this discussion. There is some overlap between the UPS and personal and social education which needs to be addressed. A more consistent approach is needed across the school in discussing progress and next steps with young people.

**Develop a clear strategic overview of the improvements needed to raise attainment.**

The school has an appropriate improvement plan for the current session. Across the school, staff are working to take forward aspects of this plan. They show a high level of commitment to improving outcomes for young people. However, staffing changes are likely to impact negatively on this work. Teachers would like stronger strategic leadership in supporting and recognising their work. Important steps have been taken which have led to improvements in attainment. This includes raised attainment in S4 and in literacy and numeracy for all those leaving school. Improvements in attainment are still needed at S5 and S6. At these stages, young people perform less well than others with similar needs and backgrounds. The school needs to continue to improve aspects of its work including the consistency of the quality of learning and teaching, in order to raise attainment for all young people.

## **What happens next?**

The school has made progress since the original inspection and taken forward some important improvements. The school now needs time to evaluate these changes to ensure outcomes for young people are continuing to improve. As part of their on-going support, officers from Moray Council will carry out a review of the school within one year. HMI will join their team. A joint report will be published informing you of the progress being made by the school.

Carol McDonald  
HM Inspector

If you would like to receive this letter in a different format, for example, in a translation please contact the administration team on the above telephone number.

If you want to give us feedback or make a complaint about our work, please contact us by telephone on 0131 244 4330, or e-mail: [complaints@educationscotland.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:complaints@educationscotland.gsi.gov.uk) or write to us addressing your letter to the Complaints Manager, Denholm House, Almondvale Business Park, Livingston EH54 6GA.