

18 February 2025

Dear Parent/Carer

In November 2023, HM Inspectors published a letter on Lhanbryde Primary School. The letter set out a number of areas for improvement which we agreed with the school and Moray Council. Recently, as you may know, we visited the school again. During our visit, we talked to children and worked closely with the acting headteacher and staff. We heard from the acting 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 following areas for improvement were identified during the initial inspection and discussed with the acting headteacher and a representative from Moray Council.

Senior leaders should ensure that children receive their entitlement to a broad general education. Delivering learning across all curricular areas will provide greater opportunities for children to develop important skills.

There has been significant improvement in this area for development since the initial inspection.

Senior leaders worked closely with staff, children and partners to develop a curriculum rationale which is relevant to the context of the school. The overall curriculum offer has been extended to ensure that all children experience a broad general education.

Teachers now plan learning using Curriculum for Excellence learning pathways more effectively across all curriculum areas. Teachers encourage children to discuss and decide on areas they would like to learn about as well as how they would like to learn. This is enabling all children to develop a wider range of skills and to experience learning in a range of relevant contexts.

Staff have introduced German as a second modern language in the upper primary and continue to deliver French across the school. Scots' language learning also features as part of children's learning at relevant points in the school year.

Children benefit from, and enjoy, learning outdoors in the school grounds and have engaged meaningfully in maths learning in this environment. Staff should develop further outdoor learning across all stages, embedded in teacher planning to support the delivery of the broad general education. This will support children's learning and skills development.

The health and wellbeing curriculum is now more embedded in teacher planning and in the experiences of all children. Improved approaches focus on leading a healthy lifestyle. For example, children have engaged in cooking and eating healthy foods and understanding the health benefits of this on the body.

Senior leaders and staff should continue to improve the curriculum to ensure that all eight curricular areas are delivered with appropriate balance across the timetable. In consultation with children and staff, a renewed focus on science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) is being planned. A bespoke environment is currently being developed to support this important next step in curricular development.

All staff should continue to encourage and support children to celebrate their work across the curriculum through showcase events and regular communications with home. Children are developing well, their skills in organising, planning and preparing for these popular events, including as part of health week and the Harvest Café.

Senior leaders and staff should work together to improve the progress and attainment of all children.

The progress and attainment of children has improved.

Children's attainment over time has improved since the initial inspection. There has been an improvement in attainment as children progress from P1 to P4 in reading and listening and talking. There has been an improvement in attainment as children progress from P4 to P7 in reading, writing and numeracy and mathematics.

All staff have created a nurturing, inclusive environment in which children learn. Almost all children behave well and engage effectively in learning. This is helping to improve children's progress and attainment.

Teachers make effective use of a range of assessments to help them make accurate judgements about children's progress and attainment. Senior leaders and teachers use this data effectively to identify children who may require additional support. The frequency of progress and attainment meetings has been increased to more effectively monitor children's progress and attainment. Teachers provide a range of supports to help children to close gaps in their learning. Almost all children who receive targeted interventions are making good progress with their individual targets. A few children need more challenge in their learning. Increased challenge is supporting staff well to raise the attainment of all children further. Senior leaders should now develop further their use of data to help them to accelerate progress towards closing gaps between groups of children. This includes gaps in attainment for children facing financial hardship.

Senior leaders correctly identified the need to improve attainment further in writing and in numeracy and mathematics. All teachers have worked together well to develop how they plan and deliver learning in these areas. They have introduced a new annual overview and developed a bank of learning activities for numeracy and mathematics. They have also revised the allocation of support staff to better support writing activities. All staff should continue to consider carefully how they embed literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing across all curricular areas. Senior leaders should continue to monitor the progress of all children in these areas and review and revise approaches to raising attainment as appropriate.

Ensure that all children have equitable opportunities to participate in wider achievement activities which are systematically tracked and monitored.

There has been significant improvement in this area since the initial inspection.

Children's achievements are now tracked successfully by their teachers. This enables senior leaders and staff to recognise children's achievements and celebrate their accomplishments.

Children shared information about clubs and activities they participate in, both within and outwith the school day through an online survey.

Staff know their children well and are aware of who may be at risk of non-participation in wider achievement activity. Staff regularly support children to participate in the most appropriate available activities. Children's achievements are celebrated in assemblies, through certificates such as 'Star Reader' and 'Phenomenal Friday' and on the school's achievements display board. These are valued by children and help develop well their sense of ambition and aspiration to achieve.

Children now experience choice in the range and quantity of opportunities to participate in learning outwith the classroom. Staff have extended their work with key partners, including those from the local community, to enhance children's learning and skills development. Partners provide activities such as multi sports, knitting, football, boccia and cricket. These opportunities are developing well important skills, including communication, problem solving and teamwork. School staff also offer a range of opportunities for children to participate in clubs and activities, including choir, art club and reading club.

Teachers and children use 'Bee our Best' hives in every class to enable children and staff to recognise achievements visually. These are used well to recognise how children's achievements are linked to the Curriculum for Excellence four capacities. Class teachers discuss these regularly with children individually. Teachers now need to develop a more consistent approach to these one-to-one discussions about achievements. This would support children further to recognise the importance of their achievements and the skills they are developing as a result of their participation.

Participating in, and learning from, these opportunities for wider achievements is impacting positively on children's experiences in school and on the development of key skills. Staff report that these improvements are impacting on the school ethos. Children's ambition in striving to achieve well, both within the classroom and beyond the school day, is increasing.

Staff should continue to develop this area of work and extend further its use of partners, both locally and nationally. Senior leaders and staff should now track the skills children are developing through these wider achievement activities. Effective use of their skills framework and whole school tracking system should support them to do this.

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. Moray Council will inform parents about the school's progress as part of its arrangements for reporting on the quality of its schools.

Teri McIntosh
HM Inspector