

Your Ref:

Education Services

Our Ref: DISTRICT\INFO\QI INDICES\ES\REPORTS\
WEST\PARK\LET001-CG\EG\RL

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To:

Any enquiries please contact

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**All Parents and Carers of Pupils at
Park Primary School**

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Dear Parent / Carer

**LETTER REPORTING ON PROGRESS OF PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL SINCE
EDUCATION SCOTLAND REPORT OF MARCH 2015**

Park Primary School was inspected by Education Scotland in January 2015. The inspection focussed on: 1) How well children learn and achieve; 2) How well the school supports children to develop and learn and 3) How well the school improves the quality of its work. Education Scotland awarded Park Primary School an evaluation of 'good' for the curriculum, learners' experiences and meeting learners' needs. Improvements in performance and improvement through self-evaluation were awarded an evaluation of 'satisfactory'.

As part of the quality reporting arrangements of Education Services, Dumfries and Galloway Council, I am writing to inform you of the progress made by Park Primary School since the publication of the Education Scotland report in March 2015. The report highlighted three main aspects for development. This letter sets out actions taken by the school in addressing these points.

Continue to improve children's achievements

Within the nursery setting, children have increased opportunities to take on responsibility for the selection and management of resources and are more able to justify choices as a result. Staff encourage greater independence and perseverance through day-to-day routines.

PLPs were revised to focus learning targets and create manageable and meaningful records of achievements and next steps. Children and parents alike are more able to discuss children's learning and individual targets. The new documentation has proved informative at transition into primary one and has enabled teachers to plan effectively for the initial stages of primary one.

A number of systems have been introduced to ensure frequent and ongoing engagement and discussion of learning e.g. Folder Friday, Big Book Planning, Learning Wall, 'My Achievements' wall. These enable children and parents to contribute to the planning and review of children's learning.

Nursery staff have begun trialling online profiling that will allow parents to contribute to children's profiles and record achievements outwith nursery through a mobile app. If successful, this will be extended to all nursery children over the new session.

A new reporting format has been introduced throughout the school that focuses on target setting, review and identification of next steps. This is completed in consultation with children and parents. Feedback from parents suggested that 'new style' Parent Consultations give clearer information about children's attainment and achievements and parents are more aware of how they can support their children at home. Most children are able to talk about their achievements and next steps in learning. This now needs to be embedded fully in day-to-day practice.

Individual skills passports have been developed to track children's progress in their development of transferrable skills for life and work. Teaching staff have introduced a number of new initiatives to address the needs of individuals and groups. Extra-curricular activities have been extended to include a debating club, Junior Road Safety Officers, girls' football team, arts and craft club and Play Leaders training. Opportunities for wider achievement as well as local community links and engagement with the world of work are now included in class planning. Tracking meetings between class teachers and the Headteacher have been extended to include discussions on wider achievement and the development of transferrable skills. Teaching staff in the upper school are currently exploring opportunities for children to gain accredited awards such as the John Muir and Dynamic Youth Awards from next session.

In 2015, the school received Access to Education Funding to run a family learning programme that will allow families to engage in learning together. The project has been developed in consultation with children and parents and is supported by partner agencies and volunteer groups. Programme planning also identifies and supports opportunities for parents to gain formal qualifications for further learning and volunteering as well as providing support for families to continue to engage in family learning activities.

Ensure high expectations of children's learning and progress across the nursery and primary stages

A number of initiatives and approaches have been trialled to enhance literacy and numeracy within the nursery setting. Children involved in the TLQ (Talking, Listening and Questioning) programme made significant gains in language over a short period. Over a fifteen week programme, there was an average improvement of 20 months in terms of language development. This work is now being extended to include target groups in primary one.

Within nursery, there are increased opportunities for children to discuss and develop maths concepts through play. Nursery and early years' staff are currently exploring ways to further enhance 'maths talk' across the early years setting and are considering ways to support parents in developing numeracy at home.

Nursery children have taken on a lead role in 'Eco Schools' and are actively involved in litter management, recycling and bird feeding programmes. In addition, nursery children are

allocated 'jobs' within nursery encouraging responsibility, independence and a sense of team work. Pre-school children also 'buddy' new starts to nursery.

Nursery staff have made good use of community links to increase awareness of the local environment and the world of work. Children have drawn from experiences to set up and model role-play within the nursery setting. They have established a formal link with a local care home and engaged in joint projects.

Revised curricular frameworks and tracking records have supported progression and led to increased expectations in reading, writing and numeracy across all levels.

Early intervention strategies, in particular literacy assessments (POLAAR) and reading interventions (SRS), have enabled staff to effectively target support, addressing 'gaps' in attainment in the early stages of the child's schooling. As a result, children are more able to participate in class learning and learn as part of a group.

A progression framework for writing was developed, setting out increased expectations at all levels. Children across all stages are more able to talk about success criteria in writing and are aware of their own individual targets. Class teachers moderate writing and agree standards and expectations. Children working at second level have experienced increased challenge. This has had a positive impact on attainment in writing.

Whole school approaches to mental calculation has led to increased confidence across stages. Children are observed to engage enthusiastically in mental maths activities and are motivated to improve and achieve personal targets. The introduction of a whole school numeracy framework increased expectations across levels, highlighting the need for increased opportunities for children to discuss number concepts and approaches to problem solving. This was identified as a key area for improvement in the school improvement plan and staff are currently exploring ways to enhance understanding through 'maths talk'.

Develop approaches to self-evaluation to secure ongoing improvements

Nursery staff have actively sought opportunities to reflect on and enhance their own practice to improve learners' experiences e.g. visiting local and national centres of good practice, attending and delivering training courses and taking part in school and regional working groups. As a result, the nursery team have been able to effectively contribute to the formation and ongoing implementation and evaluation of the nursery improvement plan. This in turn has resulted in a shared vision for the nursery and strong commitment to improvement.

All staff participate in annual professional and career reviews. Individual targets are now more closely matched with school improvement planning and reflect overall needs within the school.

The introduction of the school app has provided increased opportunities for parents to keep abreast of school developments and comment through questionnaires. Online pupil merit systems and more recently online profiling in nursery offer regular updates on children's behaviour and achievements and allow direct messaging between parents and class teachers. This has greatly improved home-school communication and created further opportunities for parents to comment on school and individual developments.

Within school we have been exploring ways to involve parents and partner organisations in the review and development of policy and practice within school. To this end, staff, parents and partner agencies participated in 'Respect Me' anti-bullying training. Training will now

be delivered to other parents, children and organisations with the long term aim of informing school policy and developing a community approach to anti-bullying. Initial feedback suggests that this has been viewed positively by stakeholders.

Staff plan collaboratively to ensure consistent expectations and ongoing progress at stages and across levels, with particular focus on literacy and numeracy. This also provides a forum for class teachers to discuss approaches to learning and teaching and share and challenge practice and develop joint resources. Staff are committed to refining this process to ensure ongoing and continual improvements across the school.

Termly tracking meetings between class teachers and the Headteacher provide an opportunity to reflect on class and school trends in attainment and achievement. Class action plans are drafted to include intervention strategies for individuals and groups, consideration of resources and support and identify staff and school training and development needs. The action plan is reviewed and the impact of approaches assessed. Collective information helps inform school improvement planning.

Park Primary School demonstrates a very good capacity for future improvement. This is the result of the hard work and commitment of the Headteacher, staff and children. I wish to congratulate all within the school community on their progress over the last year.

Yours sincerely

Colin Grant
Director of Children, Young People and Lifelong Learning