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Date: 5 October 2021

Education & Learning Directorate

The Bridge
Glasgow Road
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To:

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

Any enquiries please contact:

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Dear Parent / Carer

**LETTER REPORTING ON PROGRESS OF KIRKINNER PRIMARY SCHOOL
SINCE THE EDUCATION SCOTLAND REPORT OF AUGUST 2019.**

Kirkinner Primary School was inspected by Education Scotland in May 2019. The inspection focussed on learning, teaching and assessment and children's attainment and achievements.

As part of the quality reporting arrangements of Education and Learning Directorate, Dumfries and Galloway Council, I am writing to inform you of the progress made by Kirkinner Primary School since the publication of the Education Scotland report in August 2019. The report highlighted two main aspects for development. This letter sets out actions taken by the school in addressing these points.

Ensure that the pace and level of challenge in lessons is appropriate for all children.

All staff have engaged in professional dialogue to discuss what constitutes effective pace and challenge in learning and all staff now have a deeper understanding of these terms and what this looks like in practice. All staff have participated in relevant professional learning opportunities including Visible Learning development sessions, collegiate moderation activities and related webinars during the lockdown periods. The school has established effective approaches to ensure appropriate differentiation to meet the needs of all learners is delivered through its learning and teaching methodologies.

Learners are assessed using a range of strategies and progress is tracked using newly developed progression frameworks. These are reviewed regularly to ensure that all learners are working at the correct level and that support is provided where required. Teaching and non-teaching staff have completed various training opportunities allowing interventions such as Closing the Literacy Gap and Closing the Numeracy Gap to be successfully implemented to support individuals and small groups in their learning. These interventions allow the school to ensure that the individual needs of pupils are being met.

Regular attainment meeting discussions between the Class Teacher and the Headteacher retain a focus on pace and challenge. This ensures consistency of approach and supports positive levels of pace and challenge in learning and teaching, which have been noted in classroom observations. Information from attainment meetings is used to support an increasing range of interventions across the school. These interventions are supporting children to learn at the appropriate level and to make good progress in their learning.

Staff are making good use of assessment approaches to carefully plan learning activities which match learner needs, ensuring that all children continue to make appropriate progress. This is evident in the well-matched learning activities within the classroom and those shared with learners during the two periods of remote learning. This work, alongside robust tracking and monitoring, underpins the collective determination of school staff to ensure that the pace and challenge is appropriate for all children thereby securing sustained improvements in children's attainment across the curriculum.

Review the school's approach to target-setting and planning to support progression in learning and high expectations of all children.

The school has continued to embed new literacy and numeracy structures to ensure a shared understanding of progression. These have supported staff to plan progressive learning and teaching opportunities. These, along with newly created pupil friendly Numeracy and Talking & Listening progression pathways are providing valuable opportunities for pupils to set their own targets whilst also promoting high expectations of all learners.

The new pupil friendly Numeracy and Talking & Listening progression pathways provide a toolkit for the teacher and the learner to engage in learning conversations. Learners are increasingly able to talk confidently about their own strengths and what they need do to improve, thereby setting their own targets for improvement. This links well to the planning of high-quality learning and teaching experiences, which in turn motivates the learners to further develop their independent learning skills and to have high expectations of their own progress.

Children are more confident in talking about themselves as learners and have had further opportunities to develop their pupil voice. This has been supported by the school's development work within Visible Learning, where learners are being encouraged and supported with appropriate strategies and methodologies to be

assessment-capable learners. Learners track their own progress in this area using newly created Learner Capability Rubrics.

The school has continued to develop the 'Skills Friday' programme by creating and implementing a progressions framework for pupils to track a range of skills for life, learning and work. During the pandemic, opportunities to fully implement 'Skills Friday' have been limited but staff did capitalise on remote learning and home learning to signpost learning opportunities within the home to support the development of skills.

The pace and progress against the Education Scotland recommendations were adapted in response to Covid-19 related challenges. During lockdowns, the Headteacher retained the focus on online learning, the recovery curriculum and also health and wellbeing of staff and learners.

Since the Education Scotland inspection, and considering particular challenges encountered due to the Covid-19 pandemic, Kirkiner Primary School has continued to demonstrate a good capacity for future improvement and has built on the positive start made. 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

Jim Brown
Head of Education (Curriculum & Quality) and Chief Education Officer