

**Education & Learning Directorate**

The Bridge  
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Your Ref:

Our Ref: DISTRICT\INFO\QI\INDICES\ES\REPORTS\  
NITHSDALE\KIRKBEAN PS\LET001-JB\EB\RL

Date: 19 March 2021

To:

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

Any enquiries please contact:

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Dear Parent / Carer

**LETTER REPORTING ON PROGRESS OF KIRKBEAN PRIMARY SCHOOL SINCE  
THE EDUCATION SCOTLAND REPORT OF MARCH 2020**

Kirkbean Primary School was inspected by Education Scotland in January 2020. The inspection focussed on leadership of change; learning, teaching and assessment; ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion 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 Kirkbean Primary School since the publication of the Education Scotland report in January 2020. The report highlighted two main aspects for development. This letter sets out actions taken by the school in addressing these points.

**Staff should continue with plans to develop the curriculum, ensuring clear  
progression in children's skills across all aspects of learning.**

The school has ensured they continue to progress school improvement, despite the challenges around school closure due to the global Covid-19 pandemic. A new Progression Planner for the teaching of Health and Wellbeing has been developed to ensure clear progression in children's skills. Embedded within this document, and core to the school ethos, are Children's Rights. Building on the children's understanding around equity, the school is ensuring that they also understand diversity and discrimination. In addition, Kirkbean Primary has worked with pupils and staff to create a meaningful

Wellbeing Self-Assessment. This involved the children reflecting on how they feel in relation to each of the eight Wellbeing Indicators (Safe, Healthy, Achieving, Nurtured, Active, Respected, Responsible, Included). They score themselves using ‘thumbs-up thumbs down or thumbs sideways’, a scoring system already firmly embedded in school life. The findings provide a rich source of information which can be discussed and acted upon. This Self-Assessment is carried out twice a year, more often if required. The information is also tracked and monitored by the Headteacher. Throughout this development work, the school engaged with pupils, parents and partners. They were able to do this in working groups prior to the global pandemic and associated restrictions.

Kirkbean Primary has developed a new Progression Planner for learning and teaching Listening and Talking, ensuring clear progression in children’s skills. The Progression Planner makes rich links with other aspects of Literacy and across the curriculum. The school has improved how Listening and Talking is assessed by introducing progressive individual and group talk assessments, all of which are benchmarked. Children are provided with greater opportunity to peer and self-assess Listening and Talking skills, thus encouraging them to lead their learning. During this process, the school engaged with parents and partners digitally, due to the global pandemic. The school will now track individual pupil progress in Listening and Talking.

Clear progression in children’s skills is ensured through the new Progression Planner for learning and teaching Writing. The planner makes rich links with other aspects of Literacy and across the curriculum. Included within this new document are Progression Planners for the teaching of spelling, punctuation and grammar. The school has created new, progressive assessments which are in line with the Curriculum for Excellence Benchmarks. These are used to track pupil progress in learning. High quality assessments linked to real-life situations will now be used to establish how well children apply the skills they have learned. During this process, the school engaged with parents and partners digitally, due to the global pandemic. Children continue to be involved in the planning and assessment of their learning. In this way, the school will ensure that all pupils are able to reach their full potential.

To ensure clear progression in children’s skills, the school is currently developing a new Progression Planner for learning and teaching Reading. This planner will also make links with other aspects of Literacy and across the curriculum. As part of this process, the school will review how reading is assessed. It is intended this work is completed by the end of session 2020/21.

Despite the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic, the school has continued to use Education Scotland’s *How Good Is OUR School?* document. An online survey for all pupils was created, using the guidance from Theme 1: Relationships. The results were extremely positive with almost all pupils scoring highly against each question.

Kirkbean Primary is tracking children’s Wider Achievement activities. The school is developing ways in which the skills children acquire through these activities can be tracked. Through the review of Progression Planners, the school will ensure that they teach and track skills progressively. This review will continue across the curriculum.

**Continue to develop effective approaches to learning, teaching and assessment to raise further children's attainment and achievement.**

Pupils and teachers continue to create together Learning Targets which are discussed with parents and pupils during Learning Conversations. These Learning Targets are also discussed with the Support for Learning Teacher during Progress Meetings and are now linked to Individual Educational Programmes (IEPs). The school also discusses Learning Targets with their Learning Assistants.

As a Partnership, the Kirkbean Primary and New Abbey Primary work together on School Improvement, each teacher taking forward a different aspect of development. On full return and removal of physical distancing restrictions, the schools will continue to maximise Partnership opportunities for pupil collaboration and learning and for staff to moderate learning, teaching and assessment.

The school has increased opportunities for the children to learn outdoors, maximising the potential of their unique grounds. Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, the school hosted a successful Learning Outdoors after school event to which parents and local teachers were invited.

Kirkbean Primary is developing a new Teaching Observation Feedback Record which includes the importance of Higher Order Thinking Skills, opportunities for open-ended tasks and for children to lead learning. The school will collaborate with pupils on this on their full return.

The school and its Parent Council are actively raising funds to support the purchase of iPads, facilitating the increased use of technology to support learning across the curriculum. The children are confidently able to use laptop and desktop computers in school, to enhance their learning across the curriculum. A positive outcome of remote learning is that all pupils have access to a laptop at home and almost all are efficient with electronic communication, online research and word processing skills.

The school has prioritised the review of Numeracy and Maths Teaching for School Development in session 2021/22. Professional learning on Stages of Early Arithmetical Learning (SEAL) has already been arranged for throughout the year. This methodology focuses on teaching mental strategies with numbers, prior to teaching formal, written calculations. This will lead to the creation of a Numeracy Progression Planner. The school will also review the teaching of Maths which includes Information Handling and Shape, Position and Movement.

The recommended actions outlined in Education Scotland's *Summarised Inspection Findings* informed Kirkbean Primary's School Improvement Plans for 2020/21 and 2021/22. Although there has been impact on the pace of developments due to the Covid-19 Pandemic, the school is still moving forward. Kirkbean 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

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