

Your Ref:

Our Ref: S:\Schools District\Schools Information\Quality & Improvement Indices\ES (HMI) KEEP\School ES Reports and docs KEEP\Nithsdale\Primary\Caerlaverock\E & L Progress Letter

Date: 25 February 2022

Skills, Education and Learning Directorate
The Bridge
Glasgow Road
Dumfries
DG2 9AW

To:

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

Any enquiries please contact:

Jim Brown

Direct Dial: 01387 260403

Email: ChiefEducationOfficer@dumgal.gov.uk

Dear Parent / Carer

LETTER REPORTING ON PROGRESS OF CAERLAVEROCK PRIMARY SCHOOL SINCE THE EDUCATION SCOTLAND REPORT OF SEPTEMBER 2019

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

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

Staff should continue to work together to ensure that all learners are familiar with their targets, the skills which they are developing and what they need to do to further improve.

Staff continue to monitor and evaluate learners' progress through tracking of attainment and achievement, termly attainment meetings and ongoing teacher assessment. As a result, teachers have clear information on the attainment of all pupils and have systems which promote excellence and equity. For those that require them, individualised educational plans are used to set targets. These plans involve input from staff, parents/carers and pupils.

Staff engage in discussions with learners on their progress each term. These conversations focus on ways to improve learning and teaching, and the planning of next steps. Formative assessment strategies ensure clear and concise learning intentions and

success criteria. There are clear links between pupil data, attainment meetings and setting of targets. Teachers use of a range of learning and teaching approaches including: direct interactive teaching; differentiation; effective questioning; games; and digital technologies to support learning. Children learn in a range of exciting and engaging contexts where they develop skills for learning, life and work.

Although the pandemic has restricted staff from having face-to-face meetings with parents, the school has engaged with all families in alternative on-line methods. Plans to continue to utilise the paper *Journals of Excellence* through regular sharing with parents, were adapted in light of the Covid-19 pandemic. With a move to digital learning, staff are in the process of moving these journals online, using *Class Dojo* (portfolios) for P1-4 and *World of Work* for P5-7. These will give learners increased ownership of their targets and allow parents greater access to their children's learning.

Learning targets for Literacy, Numeracy and Health & Wellbeing are shared and reflected upon termly. The four capacities (Successful Learners, Confident Individuals, Responsible Citizens and Effective Contributors) are also reviewed termly in relation to the learning experiences. Progress and the implementation of skills for learning, life and work, are the focus of a weekly class discussion, allowing staff to highlight which skills need to be revisited and practised as pupils progress and develop.

The school should proceed as planned, with strategies and interventions to continue to improve attainment in Literacy and Numeracy.

In Literacy and Numeracy, children continue to make good progress and achieve high standards of attainment. Despite the pandemic and two periods of remote learning, Scottish National Standardised Assessments undertaken this term at Primary 1, Primary 4 and Primary 7, confirm that high-quality planning for learning and teaching is supporting positive progress.

Individual pathways of learning are recorded in trackers for Literacy & English, Numeracy & Mathematics and Health & Wellbeing. Teachers use these to highlight next steps in learning and rates of progression. Staff plan collegiately across stages and between Caerlaverock and their partner school, Brownhall. Learners are able to contribute to planning.

In Literacy, Pupil Equity Funding has supported pupils through the use of the 'Closing the Literacy Gap' programme. The results of this intervention have been positive, with standardised assessment scores demonstrating that learners are making good progress in reading and spelling. All staff have had a focus on the improvement of digital literacy skills in order to access the curriculum, for example, supporting reading and writing through the use of dictation and the Immersive Reader programme.

Skills and knowledge are improving in mental maths as a result of the implementation of the school's programme of learning. This has led to increased attainment in this subject area. During the 'Maths Week Scotland' challenge, pupils worked closely with a local restaurant to plan a meal; work out costings, portion sizes and nutritional values; and to source suppliers. The meal was added to the menu, and the pupils were able to monitor the popularity of the meal with their customers. Pupil Equity Funding supported the provision of an additional teacher, who worked with focused groups and individuals. This additional practitioner also enabled teachers to carry out peer observations and team teaching.

During Covid-19 lockdowns, materials provided by the school supported parents with their understanding of how Literacy and Numeracy learning develops, and how they could support their child's learning at home. These resources included: teaching videos, websites, Teams meetings, Literacy Ladders, Closing the Literacy/Numeracy Gap materials and the Dumfries & Galloway Framework for Numeracy. The school uses Pupil Equity Funding to finance an annual subscription to two websites – Bug Club and Sumdog. These are used to develop skills in Literacy & Numeracy and were valuable for use at home throughout the pandemic.

Despite COVID-19 related challenges ...

Despite COVID-19 related challenges, Caerlaverock 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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Jim Brown', written in a cursive style.

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