

6 October 2015

Dear Parent/Carer

**Clermiston Primary School and Nursery Class  
The City of Edinburgh Council**

In September 2014, HM Inspectors published a letter on your child's school. Recently, as you may know, we visited the school again. During our visit, we talked to children and worked closely with the headteacher and staff. We heard from the headteacher and other staff how the school has continued to improve. We looked at particular areas that had been identified in the original inspection and at other aspects of the school's work, as proposed by the headteacher. As a result, we were able to find out how well children are now learning and achieving and how the school is continuing to support them to do their best. This letter sets out what we found.

**How well do children learn and achieve?**

Children in the nursery continue to learn and achieve well. They make choices and decisions on a regular basis and are developing confidence and independence. They enjoy selecting their activities in the well-developed outdoor area and exploring their senses when, for example, planting and growing. They showed great curiosity when watching their tadpoles grow. Staff are now more aware of children's strengths and development needs as learners. Children are now involved in planning and recording aspects of their own learning. Overall, children are making even stronger progress across their learning.

At the primary stages, children are now learning and achieving much better. Almost all children enjoy their learning and show a good level of motivation. Teachers are now more consistent in sharing with children what they will learn in lessons and how they will know when they have been successful. This has helped children be clearer about their own strengths and areas which need improvement. We have discussed with staff ways to improve how children's learning is recorded and shared with parents. Children are now more involved in planning aspects of their own learning and contribute well in the development of topics such as 'Save the Rhino' at the early stages and WaterAid in the middle stages. In all classes, children now experience lessons which engage them more actively in their learning. There are now many more opportunities for children to participate in good-quality discussions. They are particularly motivated by their 'spicy' challenges. Children are proud of their new library and are aware of the benefits this brings to their learning. Older children told inspectors that this has given them an increased awareness of their own literacy skills. Children's skills in writing have improved and have been celebrated by the publication of two books launched successfully at the school's Book Festival. New

approaches to teaching and learning in mathematics are improving children's progress in problem-solving and mental calculations. Across all classes, children continue to engage well with their own community through, for example, their 'Clermiston Voices' work. They are learning about the need to help others through a foodbank initiative and supporting charity. Children continue to enjoy music and performing songs. Recently, older children achieved success in the 'Edinburgh Primary Schools Glee Choir' competition. Children continue to take on various leadership roles through being house captains, 'digital leaders' and in 'buddy classes'.

### **How well does the school support children to develop and learn?**

The school's arrangements for meeting children's learning needs have improved. In the nursery and primary classes, staff continue to provide a welcoming and supportive environment for learning. Overall, tasks and activities now provide a more suitable and consistent level of challenge for children. The school's approaches to identifying and supporting children who may need additional help with their learning are now more effective. Classroom assistants play a valuable and appreciated role in these improvements which have been brought about through more regular discussion with teachers about classroom assistants' role within lessons. Parents support the work of the nursery and primary classes very well. They have supported the development of a range of new initiatives such as the large sand pit in the nursery. Parents told us they are pleased that their children's learning now shows a greater consistency across the school. They have high regard for the headteacher and the improvements he is making to the school. The senior management team have now established better arrangements for assessing children's progress and learning.

The school, with support from the City of Edinburgh Council, has now developed a clearer and shared rationale for the curriculum which is based on delivering Curriculum for Excellence. Staff now give a greater focus to providing meaningful and challenging opportunities which help children make links in their learning across the curriculum. They generally plan topics and activities in ways which take account of children's interests and help them make progress in their learning. For example, in P3, children were developing a strong understanding of health and wellbeing as they designed a poster to summarise their learning about the human body. There is a need for staff to continue to develop the curriculum to ensure it becomes more relevant to children's lives and for Curriculum for Excellence to be fully implemented. We have discussed this with the headteacher and staff.

### **How well does the school improve the quality of its work?**

The headteacher now has a clear vision for continuous improvement in the school and shares this more effectively. He is supported well by the senior management team. Staff work effectively as a team, with leadership at all levels in the school being stronger, resulting in improvements for children. For example, all staff have shown a commitment to school improvement through membership of various working groups to improve the curriculum. As a result, the plans for improvement which arose from the initial inspection are now having a positive effect on children's learning. The school has developed a number of effective strategies to monitor the

quality of learning and teaching. As a result, staff are given helpful advice to improve their practice further. Parents are consulted regularly through the Parent Council. They are kept well informed and have regular updates on progress the school is making on the areas for improvement outlined in the initial inspection. It is clear that improvements in the school's work are having a positive impact on children's learning. This, together with the continued support from the City of Edinburgh Council, gives us confidence that the school is in a position to continue to secure further improvements.

### **What happens next?**

As a result of the progress made by the school as outlined in this letter, we will make no further visits in connection with this inspection. As part of its arrangements for reporting to parents on the quality of education, the City of Edinburgh Council will inform parents about the school's progress.

Alan Urquhart  
HM Inspector

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