

16 June 2026

Dear Parent/Carer

In May 2025, HM Inspectors published a letter on Carrbridge Primary School and Nursery Class. The letter set out a number of areas for improvement which we agreed with the school and The Highland Council. 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 about the steps the school has taken to improve. We looked at particular areas that had been identified in the original inspection. As a result, we were able to find out about the progress the school has made and how well this is supporting children's learning and achievements. This letter sets out what we found.

All staff in the school must review and improve their approaches to learning, teaching and assessment. They should ensure all children experience high-quality, well-planned learning and teaching that is matched appropriately to their learning needs. The headteacher should support staff to look outwards to further develop staffs' understanding of what high quality learning and teaching looks like.

There has not yet been sufficient progress in this area. The headteacher and staff still need to take forward significant work to improve the overall quality of learning, teaching and assessment.

The headteacher developed a useful outline of key features of high-quality learning and teaching which she shared with staff. All teachers have engaged in professional learning about key features of effective learning and teaching. However, this has not yet sufficiently improved the quality of learning and teaching across the school. The headteacher, with the support of the local authority, now needs to take immediate action to ensure all teachers undertake high-quality professional learning to improve their understanding and delivery of high-quality learning and teaching.

All teachers continue to deliver learning across the curriculum. This is mostly through whole class lessons where all children are completing the same work. In reading, writing and numeracy and mathematics, children complete follow-up work at their own level, however most children require learning which is more challenging. In most lessons, the pace of learning remains too slow. This results in a few children becoming disengaged in learning and exhibiting low level disruptive behaviours. The headteacher, with the support of the local authority, needs to ensure teachers plan learning which is well-matched to the individual needs of all children across the curriculum.

Teachers now share the purpose of learning routinely with children and help them understand how they will know if they are successful. They now need to ensure that the purpose of learning and steps for success identify clearly the skills, and knowledge children will develop. This should help children to understand how well they are learning and what they need to learn or develop further. Teachers also need to continue to develop their understanding and



use of a range of questioning techniques to support children better to explain and extend their learning.

Most teachers provide verbal feedback to children about their learning in literacy and numeracy. However, as this is not recorded, most children are unable to recall the feedback given. The headteacher needs to support all teachers to develop high-quality feedback across the curriculum to help children understand the progress they make.

Teachers at the early stages are enthusiastic to develop their understanding of play pedagogy. They are beginning to provide regular opportunities for children to engage in child-led play. However, their conversations with children during play do not extend and enhance learning. The headteacher now needs to support teachers to engage further in high-quality professional learning about play pedagogy.

Teachers use a range of assessments to assess children's progress in reading, writing, numeracy and mathematics. They are not ensuring that assessment approaches are an integral feature of all planned learning. The headteacher now needs to ensure that all staff plan learning and teaching that meets effectively the needs of all children. They need to adapt activities and tasks to ensure all children have learning at the right level of difficulty. Teachers now need to use assessment tasks to support children to use their knowledge and skills in relevant, real-life contexts. They need to gather high-quality evidence of children's progress and attainment.

The headteacher and staff have developed overviews to support the planning of digital and outdoor learning across the school and nursery. These overviews do not yet highlight clearly enough how children's learning should progress as they move through the school. They now need to review these overviews to highlight clearly how children build on what they already know. They must ensure that all children are appropriately supported and challenged during digital and outdoor learning.

The headteacher has worked with staff to develop a consistent approach to planning learning and teaching. They use a range of local authority and school documents to support them. However, this is not yet ensuring a consistent approach to planning high-quality learning and teaching across the school. With the support of the local authority, the headteacher needs to support staff further to plan learning and teaching which meets effectively the needs of all children.

Practitioners in the nursery should use assessment information more effectively to enable all children to make the progress they are capable of in learning.

There has been not yet been sufficient progress in this area for improvement.

Staff now record useful, personalised observations of children's learning, particularly in literacy and numeracy, and store these appropriately in individual learning journals. A few observations are linked well to Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) experiences and outcomes. Staff are beginning to use this evidence to support their professional judgements about



children's progress. However, staff do not yet consistently link their observation, assessment, and planning. The headteacher needs to ensure staff observe and record significant learning across all curriculum areas and use this evidence more effectively to inform planning.

Staff identify a few next steps for a few children, mainly in literacy and numeracy, however most children do not yet have clear next steps recorded. The headteacher needs to now ensure next steps are identified for all children which are clearly linked to prior learning. She must ensure these are specific, achievable, and developed in consultation with children and parents. Children need to be supported to recognise their achievements to help them develop independence and ownership of their learning.

Staff use an online application regularly to share children's experiences with parents. Staff are still at the early stages of identifying the skills children develop and linking these to their learning experiences. The headteacher needs to now support staff to consistently highlight the learning and skills children develop to help parents understand their child's progress.

All staff in the school and nursery should improve systems used to track and monitor children's progress and attainment. They should ensure children attain and achieve as much as possible.

There has not yet been sufficient progress in this area for improvement.

In the nursery, staff are now beginning to track children's progress towards developmental milestones and in numeracy and mathematics. They are beginning to use learning pathways successfully to make judgements about children's progress in literacy and numeracy. Nursery staff do not yet use assessment information well enough to provide targeted support or challenge. They need to use information about children's learning more effectively to identify gaps in learning. Staff must plan, record, and evaluate targeted interventions to improve outcomes for identified children. The headteacher has recently met nursery staff to discuss children's progress across the curriculum. She needs to now support staff to identify clearly children's individual progress and next steps across all curriculum areas. This should help staff to plan learning that builds upon what children already know.

Staff in the nursery gather information about children's wider achievements from parents and celebrate these effectively. They now need to help children identify the skills gained through these experiences. They must track achievements more systematically and identify children at risk of missing out. Staff should plan learning experiences to ensure all children experience achievements and success.

In the school, the headteacher now meets teachers four times a year to discuss progress. They use agreed questions to identify children's strengths and barriers to learning. Moving forward, these discussions need to be more detailed and robust using assessment evidence better to understand children's progress. Teachers should use these discussions to plan more clearly the actions needed to support children to overcome barriers to learning. The headteacher must now ensure teachers participate in discussions with colleagues from their

associated schools group to increase their confidence and reliability about children's progress against national standards.

The headteacher has developed an electronic tracking system that shows current attainment for individual children. However, the system does not yet show children's progress in attainment over time. The headteacher must develop the system further to include attainment against national standards over time. This should support her to identify and analyse trends and measure the impact of school improvement more effectively.

The headteacher and staff need to review how they measure progress for children requiring additional support. They must set clear success measures and review progress within interventions more regularly to identify the interventions that have the greatest impact on children's progress.

What happens next?

The school has made insufficient progress since the original inspection. We will liaise with The Highland Council regarding the school's capacity to improve. We will return to carry out a further inspection of the school within 12 months of the publication of this letter. We will discuss with The Highland Council the details of this inspection. When we return to inspect the school, we will write to you as parents informing you of the progress the school has made.

Denise Penman
HM Inspector

On behalf of His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education in Scotland.