

23 June 2026

Dear Parent/Carer

In April 2024, HM Inspectors published a letter on Quarryhill Primary School. The letter set out a number of areas for improvement which we agreed with the school and Aberdeen City Council. We subsequently returned to the school to look at how it had continued to improve its work, and published another letter in May 2025. 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.

Practitioners should build on their very recent, positive start to improving approaches to learning and teaching in the nursery. This will ensure experiences engage, motivate and challenge all learners appropriately.

Practitioners were identified as having made good progress in this area during the last further inspection. As a result, the nursery was not included in this further inspection.

Develop high-quality learning and teaching, using topics which children find interesting. Teachers need to adopt a greater range of approaches to teaching, which motivate children more in their learning.

Overall, there has been strong progress in addressing this area for improvement. Senior leaders and staff have taken effective action to support teachers to develop learning and teaching which interests and motivates children in their learning. All teachers have engaged in professional learning which has helped them to improve their understanding of high-quality learning and teaching. They have worked together to create a new learning and teaching policy that sets high expectations for all staff. As a result, approaches to learning and teaching have improved across the school. Most teachers now use a range of strategies in their classrooms which support children to engage meaningfully in their learning. They plan learning for children that is interesting and motivating. Teachers work with children to choose topics which children want to know more about. Children are now involved in planning their learning and developing their confidence as leaders of learning.

All teachers now use progressive frameworks in all curricular areas to plan learning activities. Children work together in pairs and small groups, using their digital skills well to research and present their learning. Most teachers provide written feedback to children which helps children to understand what they are doing well and what they need to do to improve. Staff should now work together to identify ways to further motivate and engage children in their learning, through, for example, planned learning in the local environment.



Staff have adapted learning environments to support all children to engage more effectively in their learning. This includes providing a variety of resources that children can access independently. Staff should now review the quality of all learning environments to ensure that they are engaging and motivating for all children. All staff have taken part in professional learning around the barriers children may face in their learning. They have a good understanding of children's learning needs and know children and their families well. Staff use a range of strategies to ensure learning motivates children. This supports children's behaviour and engagement in their learning.

Teachers are continuing to develop their understanding of play. They create well-designed play environments which support children's curiosity in learning and develop their social skills. Most children are focused and engaged during play and are beginning to lead their own learning. Teachers in P1 and P2 now plan together and this provides greater opportunities for children to lead their own learning during play. Staff provide appropriate support in children's play where this is needed. Staff should continue to use national guidance and professional learning to further develop their understanding of effective play pedagogy. This should help to ensure children become more confident in leading their own learning more consistently.

Develop how teachers evaluate children's progress. Teachers need to use the information they gather to plan learning which provide all children with greater challenge.

Senior leaders have taken effective action to strengthen approaches to assessment across the school. All teachers consistently use the new assessment calendar which ensures they check on children's progress at agreed points throughout the year. Teachers are becoming more confident in using a range of assessment information to support their judgement of a child's progress. Teachers now hold a more holistic and accurate picture of children's progress and are using this information to plan children's learning more effectively. Senior leaders should continue to support teachers to plan learning which provides children with the correct level of challenge, including those children capable of achieving more.

Senior leaders and teachers hold regular attainment meetings where they discuss individual children's progress. These discussions are beginning to impact positively upon children's learning experiences. Senior leaders and teachers use a range of assessment information to plan learning to meet the needs of most children. This is supporting children to better access their learning. Senior leaders should continue to support teachers to deepen their understanding and analysis of assessment information, particularly for those children who have identified gaps in their learning.

Teachers have taken part in a range of professional learning opportunities to develop their skills in assessing children's progress. They recognise the importance of ensuring their judgements of children's progress accurately match national standards. Senior leaders have planned further opportunities for staff to discuss their judgements of children's progress together. This includes collaboration with colleagues from other local primary schools.

Raise attainment in literacy and numeracy across the school. This should include ensuring that targeted approaches to support children are successfully closing gaps in children's learning.

Across the school attainment in literacy and numeracy has increased. Senior leaders have strengthened approaches to monitoring and tracking children's attainment and progress. They use effective systems for gathering children's assessment information across the year. This is helping staff to get a clearer and more accurate picture of how well children are doing. Teachers are becoming better at looking closely at children's work and progress. Staff use this information more effectively to find out where children are doing well and where extra support or improvement is needed. This work is supporting an improved attainment picture in literacy and numeracy across the school. Staff should continue to ensure that assessment data is used effectively to improve children's progress and attainment.

Teachers have made a positive start to improving literacy attainment across the school. They now work together to develop and embed agreed literacy strategies. They have introduced a number of approaches to strengthen children's understanding of literacy. Children are improving their understanding of phonics and writing. Across the school children are using more varied and challenging writing formats such as newspaper reports and information leaflets. This is beginning to result in improved literacy skills for most children. Staff now need to ensure they have a more cohesive literacy strategy that allows children a consistent experience as they progress through the school. There remains a need to improve the presentation of children's written work.

Teachers have taken part in professional learning focused on improving attainment in numeracy and mathematics. Teachers now plan children's numeracy learning progressively and ensure that children experience learning activities better matched to their needs. Senior leaders should now support teachers to build on this by increasing levels of challenge for children. This should provide children with opportunities to use what they have learned to challenges they may come across outside of school.

What happens next?

The school has made good progress since the original inspection. We are confident that the school has the capacity to continue to improve and so we will make no more visits in connection with this inspection. Aberdeen City Council will inform parents about the school's progress as part of its arrangements for reporting on the quality of its schools.

Elaine Gallagher
HM Inspector

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