

23 September 2025

Dear Parent/Carer

In August 2024, HM Inspectors published a letter on Fyvie School and Nursery Class. The letter set out a number of areas for improvement which we agreed with the school and Aberdeenshire 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.

Improve approaches to monitoring and evaluating the work of the school and nursery. In doing so, senior leaders should involve staff in leading and reviewing changes to improve children's experiences.

Overall, there has been effective progress made towards this area for improvement.

Supported well by the local authority, the headteacher has accelerated improvements in this area, while supporting staff to ensure the pace of change is manageable. The whole staff team have worked very well together to make sustainable progress in monitoring and evaluating the work of the school and nursery since the original inspection. Across the school, there is now a much greater sense of teamwork. All staff now demonstrate a very strong commitment to the shared vision to improve the work of the school and outcomes for all children. Staff and children say they are proud of their school and the improvements they have made together.

The headteacher and the school community worked together earlier this session to review the school's vision, values and aims. The refreshed school vision and values are now clearly understood and embedded across the school and nursery. This has helped to create a more aspirational, optimistic culture and ethos. Staff and children now have clear expectations for high standards of work, engagement and behaviour.

A key aspect of the school's work in this area has been the commitment to strengthening leadership across the school and nursery. In the nursery, practitioners now have roles as 'champions' with remits linked to the nursery improvement and action plans. In the school, each teacher has an identified area of leadership, for example in relation to skills development and digital learning. Children now have improved leadership opportunities which is supporting them well to make an effective contribution towards the life and the work of the school.

The pace of change and improvement this session has been fast but impactful. Going forward, staff are aware that new developments need to be embedded fully and sustained. This will help to ensure the school builds on this strong foundation for future success.

Improve the quality of learning, teaching and assessment across the school, ensuring all children's learning activities are of a consistently high quality.

Overall, there has been effective progress made towards this area for improvement.

Across the school, staff know children very well and there are caring relationships between adults and children. Children now learn in a calm, nurturing environment where they feel cared for and valued. This is supporting almost all children to engage well in learning.

Staff have worked well together to improve the quality of learning and teaching. Staff have engaged in a range of effective professional learning, for example, in relation to writing and mathematics. This is helping teachers to plan more engaging and relevant lessons which support children to build on their prior learning. Teachers have increased their use of motivating, real-life learning experiences. For example, children recently led a project with a local place of historical interest and all classes are involved in a community project. Children are enthused by these experiences which provide them with opportunities to develop knowledge, skills and understanding across a range of curricular areas.

Since the original inspection, the headteacher and staff have reviewed and adapted environments for learning to better meet the needs of children. This includes, for example, creating improved play spaces and calm zones throughout the school. Children access these spaces to play, regulate their emotions or work independently or in small groups. This is supporting children's engagement well and they are now more independent in learning.

The headteacher meets with staff three times a year to review children's outcomes and progress in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. During these meetings, the headteacher discusses a range of assessment evidence and individual children's next steps in learning. This is helping to support children to make improved progress in literacy and numeracy.

Continue to improve approaches to meeting the needs of all children in the school, including those who require additional support for learning.

Overall, there has been effective progress made towards this area for improvement.

Staff are developing approaches to promote positive wellbeing as an integral part of daily life in the school. Teachers have refreshed the health and wellbeing curriculum. They have ensured that key areas of learning, including mental, social and physical wellbeing are included. Staff and partners have helped children understand the importance of a healthy and active lifestyle. Children have learned about healthy food options and have engaged in regular physical education activities. As a result, most children feel that the school teaches them how to lead a healthy lifestyle.

The headteacher has shared with all stakeholders the refreshed anti-bullying policy. This policy establishes effectively a shared language which is used with children to promote positive relationships. All staff are confident in using agreed approaches and in the expectations and responsibilities relating to bullying. Staff support children effectively to understand their wellbeing and how they are feeling. Children discuss and evaluate their wellbeing in class lessons. As a result of this work, relationships across the school are

positive and children feel they have an effective voice in shaping the life and work of the school.

Staff work well together and with partners to support children who require additional help with their learning. This includes through a range of approaches and interventions which help children to build resilience, develop social skills and engage more fully in their learning. The headteacher and staff now need to ensure that the views of parents and children are sought and used more effectively to influence the planning process. Their views should be appropriately recorded in children's plans. In addition, staff should ensure children's targets are clear, concise and measurable. This will support staff to evaluate effectively children's progress and help children to better understand their targets and what they need to do to achieve success.

The headteacher and staff now track and monitor children's wellbeing. They use this information effectively to plan children's learning. Staff provide support for children to promote wellbeing. This includes the use of calm spaces and targeted support. Children are developing well their understanding of emotions and wellbeing. As a result, children's needs are now being supported more effectively, and children understand and talk more confidently about their wellbeing.

Raise attainment in literacy and numeracy across the school.

Overall, there has been effective progress made towards this area for improvement.

The recent focus on improving the quality of teaching, and more focused use of learning time, has had a positive impact on children's attainment in literacy and numeracy. Children are now more motivated to learn as a result of improvements in teachers' planning of learning activities. Lessons are now of a higher quality. Teachers are better at setting out intended learning for groups and individuals. This is supporting teachers to better meet children's learning needs. Children are now displaying more pride in their work and a greater enthusiasm to learn and achieve.

Teachers' revised approaches to the teaching of literacy have improved children's confidence and enthusiasm for writing. As a result, children across the school are making better progress in writing. Children's listening skills have improved since the original inspection. New approaches to assessment in numeracy and mathematics are helping staff to identify and target gaps in children's understanding. Teachers are now providing children with more regular opportunities to revisit previously taught mathematical concepts. This is helping children to practice and build on their learning.

As a result of a strong focus on development of skills for learning, life and work this session, children are increasingly confident in discussing the skills they are developing. Staff track children's achievements and take effective action to ensure children do not miss out.

What happens next?

The school has made positive 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. Aberdeenshire Council will inform parents about the school's progress as part of its arrangements for reporting on the quality of its schools.

Robyn McIlroy
HM Inspector