

12 May 2026

Dear Parent/Carer

In April 2025, HM Inspectors published a letter on St Teresa's RC Primary School. The letter set out a number of areas for improvement which we agreed with the school and Dumfries and Galloway 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.

As a priority, improve the quality of learning, teaching and assessment across the school. Senior leaders should support teachers to ensure all children's learning activities are of a consistently high quality. Teachers need to plan learning activities that are well matched to children's individual needs.

Senior leaders and staff have made strong progress in this area for improvement.

Staff across the school have worked together to improve learning and teaching since the original inspection. They have developed clear guidance that explains what good learning and teaching should look like, including how lessons should be structured and paced. This shared understanding is supporting teachers to use similar approaches across the school, which is improving consistency in learning and teaching.

Teachers now plan lessons well that balance direct instruction, discussion and active learning. They now use a consistent 'I do, we do, you do' approach, which helps children understand what they should be learning and how to complete their learning. Children are spending more time working independently and in small groups. This is helping them take increasing responsibility for leading their learning and make progress.

Across most lessons, learning is more active and better matched to children's needs. Teachers share the purpose of learning and what success looks like. Older children should now be given the opportunity to help create their own success criteria. Teachers have improved how they use questioning, including 'bounce-back' strategies that encourage deeper thinking. Children are beginning to assess their own learning and set personal targets in literacy and numeracy. Teachers give helpful verbal feedback to children during most lessons. They now need to develop their written feedback so that it consistently supports children to make progress in their learning.

Staff working with younger children have made strong improvements to classroom environments and approaches to learning through play. With support from the local authority's Play Pedagogy Team, they now plan purposeful play experiences that help children develop key skills and knowledge.

The headteacher has supported teachers well to improve how they plan learning across the curriculum. They now use clear progression pathways that show the skills children should develop as they move through each level of Curriculum for Excellence (CfE). Teachers plan learning that links different curriculum areas and follows a three-year cycle to ensure progression and breadth. They increasingly involve children in planning learning by asking what they know, what they want to learn, and how they will learn it. As a result, teachers' plans now better reflect the needs of all children in mixed-age classes, especially in literacy and numeracy. Children have more opportunities to build on previous learning. Staff should continue with plans to make greater use of the local area to enhance learning.

Raise attainment in literacy and numeracy across the school. Senior leaders and teachers need to use reliable assessment information to identify and address gaps in children's learning. Teachers need to develop a better understanding of national standards.

Senior leaders and staff have made positive progress in this area for improvement.

Senior leaders and staff have taken positive steps to raise attainment across the school. They can evidence improvements in attainment in literacy and numeracy. Senior leaders and staff should ensure that raising attainment remains a key priority across the school, with a focus on writing and numeracy.

Since the original inspection, teachers have made improvements to how they assess children's learning. With support from the headteacher, teachers have increased confidence in using assessment information effectively. They use a range of strategies during lessons to check children's understanding and use this information to plan next steps in learning. Teachers have better information about how children are progressing in their learning. Teachers work with colleagues from other schools to discuss standards of work. This is supporting them to become more familiar with national expectations. As a result, there is increased confidence among teachers to make judgements about children progress and attainment.

Senior leaders and staff have worked together effectively to improve approaches to tracking children's progress and attainment through CfE levels. They have developed a new system to track more effectively the progress of children in literacy and numeracy. Staff use these approaches well to discuss children who are on track to achieve expected levels of attainment and who need further challenge or support. Staff use this information well to plan learning set at the right level of challenge in children's learning. This is having a positive impact on improving children's progress in literacy and numeracy.

Senior leaders and class teachers meet termly to review the progress of every child in each class. All staff ensure that these meetings have a clear focus on children's learning and improving outcomes. Staff identify appropriate interventions and agree steps to support children's development in their learning. As a result, identified children now make better gains. Staff should continue to work together to plan interventions which will support all children to make strong advances in learning and reduce any gaps in achievement.

Continue to improve leadership at all levels. Children are ready to take on more responsibilities, including helping to improve their school.

Senior leaders and staff have made effective progress in this area for improvement.

Staff work well together sharing their collective skills to improve outcomes for children. Every teacher has opportunities to lead change in the school, such as developing literacy, numeracy, play and pupil leadership groups. These leadership roles are making a positive difference to children's learning. For example, staff's recent focus on improving writing is helping children, especially older children, make better progress. Senior leaders now need to help all staff who lead improvements to create action plans that include clear timelines and checkpoints.

Across the school, children are given more frequent opportunities to undertake responsibilities and leadership roles. This includes being house captains, speaking at assemblies and leading clubs. Children take part in groups such as the sustainability and community groups, where they present to others and help organise whole-school events. These experiences are helping children develop confidence, resilience and communication skills. As a result, most children clearly articulate the skills required to be an effective leader.

Since the original inspection, children have more regular opportunities to share their views. For example, pupil voice walls demonstrate how everyone's ideas are heard and acted on. Children feel they have more influence on school decisions, such as changes made to the playground. As a next step, the headteacher should involve children more formally and frequently in evaluating other aspects of the life of the school such as learning and teaching.

Continue to improve the curriculum, including the programme for health and wellbeing. Children would benefit from learning more about their own wellbeing and about diversity and equality.

Senior leaders and staff have made effective progress in this area for improvement.

Staff have reviewed health and wellbeing information and adapted the curriculum to meet children's individual needs. They have created a three-year programme to guide weekly lessons and which supports a balanced and well-structured approach. Staff confidence in teaching health and wellbeing has grown through professional learning. Children experience a broad and more cohesive learning programme and are developing their knowledge

effectively of how to stay safe and healthy. Staff identify and address individual concerns and monitor wellbeing across the school. They use the wellbeing indicators well to undertake this work through regular assemblies and surveys completed by children. As a result, children are becoming more aware of the factors that influence wellbeing.

Children are developing a better understanding of religious and cultural diversity through school events and reading activities. Staff should continue to support children's understanding of equality and unique qualities of individuals to support them to respect and include further all members of their community.

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. Dumfries and Galloway Council will inform parents about the school's progress as part of its arrangements for reporting on the quality of its schools.

Simon Gallon
HM Inspector

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