

16 June 2026

Dear Parent/Carer

In June 2025, HM Inspectors published a letter on Forehill Primary School. The letter set out a number of areas for improvement which we agreed with the school and Aberdeen City Council. Recently as you may know, we visited the school again. During our visit, we talked to children and worked closely with the acting headteacher and staff. We heard from the acting 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.

With support from the local authority, senior leaders, need to improve approaches to evaluating the work of the school. They should use more robust evaluations to help them identify key priorities. It is important that staff are able to demonstrate fully that their actions are improving outcomes for all children.

Since the original inspection, senior leaders and staff have made an effective start to developing this area for improvement. They now need to build on existing work and embed approaches to evaluating the work of the school to improve further outcomes for all children.

Senior leaders, working with staff, developed plans to improve the work of the school. Following discussion with staff, the acting headteacher has updated these plans. They now detail how improvements will be implemented, monitored and tracked to ensure there is sustained impact. Staff have begun to implement these plans. They report that this approach helps them recognise what has improved and understand their role in taking forward improvements. This has strengthened staff morale and their confidence to contribute to continuous improvement.

Staff, led by the deputy headteacher, have worked successfully in an effective and collaborative approach to make improvements. These improvements have been in play. In doing so, they reviewed current approaches and engaged with national guidance and professional development. Senior leaders should continue to take forward future improvements using this collaborative approach. The local authority should continue to monitor this work to ensure that recent improvement is sustained and becomes firmly established across the school.

Senior leaders have created a calendar which sets out how they check the quality of children's learning. They have begun to carry out activities such as learning walks and reviewing children's work in jotters. Senior leaders share what they find with staff, highlighting



strengths as well as areas to improve. Senior leaders should continue with their plans to implement fully all aspects of this calendar.

Teachers have worked together in groups to take forward improvements in leadership, learning and teaching, and raising attainment. They have developed helpful guidance to support more consistent practice across the school. Senior leaders now need to check carefully how these changes are improving children's learning and progress over time. Senior leaders should proceed as planned to ensure that all future working groups have clear plans for improvement.

Local authority staff visit the school regularly to support improvement. These visits have helped identify strengths and areas which still need to improve. Senior leaders share key messages with staff, leading to some improvements in learning and teaching. For example, children now have a strong understanding of what they are learning and how to be successful.

Teachers have been involved in reviewing aspects of school practice, including learning environments and planning. As a result, classrooms are now more organised, attractive and welcoming. Children respect and take pride in their learning spaces. Teachers now plan together using a more consistent approach.

Senior leaders are at the early stages of involving children and parents in evaluating the work of the school. Senior leaders should continue to strengthen pupil voice groups so that children understand how their views help improve the school. Staff also need to increase opportunities for all parents to share feedback and contribute to school improvement.

Senior leaders and staff should improve the quality of learning, teaching and assessment, including learning through play. This will ensure all children benefit from high quality experiences that meet their learning needs.

Staff have made a positive start to improving the quality of learning, teaching and assessment, including learning through play.

All staff have engaged in professional learning and worked well with colleagues to improve their classroom spaces. As a result, learning environments are now more inviting, engaging, and well organised. Children demonstrate increased pride in and respect for their learning environment, which supports their engagement in learning.

There have been some improvements in the pace of learning across the school. In a majority of classes, where learning moves at a pace that matches children's needs, children are motivated and fully engaged. Teachers are increasingly planning learning activities that are active and purposeful. Children enjoy these lessons and are more engaged in their learning. Teachers plan morning and starter challenges well. This supports children to be engaged in learning activities from the beginning of the day, resulting in less 'down' time.



Senior leaders have introduced clear expectations about what makes a good lesson. Teachers have made improvements in this area, particularly in sharing the purpose of learning and how children will know they have been successful. Almost all children can confidently explain what they are learning and how to succeed.

All teachers rely less on worksheets and commercially produced materials. However, across most classes there is still not enough challenge in learning. Many children complete the same tasks, regardless of their ability. Staff recognise the need to adapt learning more effectively so that all children are appropriately challenged.

Teachers give clear instructions and use questions to check children's understanding. While some teachers already encourage deeper thinking, children would benefit from more open-ended questions to develop creativity and problem-solving skills. Teachers should continue to build on recent professional learning in this area.

Almost all children in P3-P7 show a strong understanding of their progress in writing. They confidently articulate what they have achieved and identify clear, individualised targets for their next steps in learning. This helps them take responsibility for their learning. In most other subjects, however, many children are not yet able to talk clearly about their progress. Teachers should apply aspects of the successful practice seen in writing more consistently across the wider curriculum.

Senior leaders have introduced a shared approach to feedback. This is at an early stage and improvements are not yet consistent. Where feedback is strongest, particularly in writing, teachers give clear guidance on what children have done well and how to improve. Feedback in other areas of learning now needs to be strengthened.

There have been clear improvements in learning through play for younger children. Staff have worked closely together, used national guidance and learned from other schools to improve learning spaces. Staff use children's ideas to shape play activities, helping children develop creative and imaginative skills. Younger children, when engaged in play activities, are increasingly leading their own learning. This is positive. This work has led to positive changes in daily routines and learning spaces. Children are now calmer, more settled and more engaged in their learning during play activities. Teachers now need to plan learning activities that allow children to consistently make choices and take the lead in their learning. This will help children become more confident, independent learners. The Parent Council has supported improvements in play by helping to fund new resources, and staff plan to involve children in choosing these.

There have been notable improvements in the outdoor learning provision for all children. Children across all stages now take part in weekly outdoor learning sessions that link well to classroom learning. Staff make good use of the school grounds and work with partners to enrich learning. All children are motivated and engage fully in their outdoor learning.

Senior leaders have been reviewing how children's learning is assessed and are helping teachers make better use of this information. Teachers are becoming more confident in

understanding how well children are progressing, especially in numeracy. However, this information is not always used to adjust lessons so that all children are challenged appropriately. Teachers should continue to use assessment information to plan learning that supports and stretches every child.

Teachers work together well to plan learning and check and agree standards in children's work. This has helped improve planning and their confidence in judgements about the level children are working at. Senior leaders have identified further opportunities to work with other schools to help strengthen this work.

Staff should raise attainment in literacy and numeracy across the school. At all stages, children are capable of achieving more.

Senior leaders and staff have taken positive steps to raise attainment in literacy and numeracy across the school. Whilst positive signs of improvement have been seen, senior leaders and staff should ensure that raising attainment remains a key priority across the school.

During session 2024/25, attainment at early level improved overall, with almost all children meeting expected standards in numeracy and listening and talking, and most achieving in reading and writing. At first and second levels, while most children continued to achieve expected standards across numeracy and literacy, attainment was lower than in the previous year. A minority of children across the school are still capable of achieving more.

Teachers' improved review of assessment evidence and data has led them to make more accurate and robust judgements. As a result, this session's attainment information gives a more reliable picture of children's progress than in previous years. Staff evidence shows that attainment at first and second levels is improving. Teachers make increasingly reliable judgements as a result of professional learning, dialogue and support from senior leaders.

Senior leaders have introduced a clear assessment calendar which sets out when standardised assessments will take place. They gather information from these assessments in school-wide tracking systems, giving them a clearer overview of children's progress across the school.

Senior leaders and staff use assessment information well to identify children who need additional support, those who are making expected progress and those who are exceeding expectations. In a few classes, teachers use this information effectively to provide extra challenge for those children who require it. This is not yet consistent across the school.

Senior leaders have introduced a new approach to writing for children in P3 to P7. Teachers have taken part in professional learning to support this. As a result, children's enjoyment of writing has increased and attainment has improved.

**HMIE**

His Majesty's Inspectorate of Education in Scotland
Luchd-sgrùdaidh an Rìgh airson Foghlam ann an Alba

What happens next?

The school has made clear progress since the initial inspection, however, require additional time to embed these positive changes fully. We will liaise with Aberdeen City Council regarding the school's capacity to improve. We will return to carry out a further inspection of the school within one year of the publication of this letter. We will discuss with Aberdeen City 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.

Jennifer Wadley
HM Inspector

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