

30 June 2026

Dear Parent/Carer

In March 2024, HM Inspectors published a letter on Stratherrick 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. We subsequently returned to the school to look at how it had continued to improve its work, and published another letter in June 2025. Recently, as you may know, we visited the school again. During our visit, we talked to children and worked closely with the newly appointed 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.

The headteacher and staff should ensure children's learning activities are of a consistently high quality and set at the right level of challenge for all children.

Overall, the school needs to make more progress in improving the quality of children's learning experiences. The acting headteacher is committed to leading improvement and change across the school. Teachers have worked together well to have a shared understanding of what makes a good lesson. Staff should now apply agreed teaching and learning approaches consistently in all lessons. The acting headteacher should make regular visits to classes and provide teachers with helpful feedback on the quality of children's learning and teaching. This should help ensure that children's learning activities are of a consistently high quality.

Children learn in a calm and positive environment where they feel safe and are ready to learn. Relationships are strong and support very positive interactions. Some children disengage when learning is not well matched to their needs. Teachers should provide activities for children that are set at the right level of difficulty. This should help ensure that all children receive appropriate support and challenge in their learning and activities.

Teachers are beginning to involve children more in planning their learning, especially in topic work. Teachers now plan children's learning in all curricular areas more progressively. This helps teachers build on what children already know and supports teachers well to incorporate children's interests in lessons. Teachers should now involve children more in setting learning goals using appropriate child friendly language. This should support children to understand better what they need to do to be successful.

In most lessons, teachers provide children with a range of helpful verbal feedback. While this feedback is generally effective, the quality of written comments is less consistent. The acting headteacher should work with teachers to improve the consistency of written feedback on

children's learning. This should help children understand better what they are doing well and what they need to do to improve further.

Parents value opportunities where they can come into school and work alongside their children. They feel that this helps them to understand better how and what their children are learning. The acting headteacher and staff should take forward their plans to enhance further parental engagement in children's learning. This should help ensure that parents are active partners in their child's education and contribute positively to the quality of their children's learning experiences.

Children who require support with their learning or wellbeing have individualised learning plans. Teachers need to audit and review these plans more frequently and in line with agreed timescales to ensure targets remain relevant and appropriate. This should help staff to effectively meet the needs of all children.

The headteacher should improve the approaches to tracking and monitoring children's progress. This will ensure that practitioners and teachers have a clear understanding of children's progress in all aspects of their learning.

Overall, the acting headteacher and staff need to develop further their approaches to track and monitor children's learning effectively.

Across the school and nursery, the acting headteacher and staff should work to reestablish and develop further their approaches to monitoring children's progress in learning. There is a need to have an overview and consistent approaches to reviewing children's progress across all curriculum areas.

Over this academic year teachers have not had enough meetings with school leaders to discuss children's progress. The acting headteacher, with support from the local authority, should work with teachers to develop agreed times across the year to discuss and review children's progress. This should help them identify children who are making positive progress across the curriculum. It should also help them identify children who would benefit from additional support with their learning. The acting headteacher and staff should clearly record key points and actions from these discussions and identify what approaches are helping to accelerate children's learning. This should help ensure that all children make the best possible progress.

In the nursery, practitioners know children well and meet their needs appropriately. They use local authority early level trackers to record children's progress in literacy and numeracy. However, practitioners need further support from the local authority and the acting headteacher to ensure they get the right amount of time to review and update trackers. In addition, practitioners and P1 teachers would benefit from agreed time together to share tracking and progress of preschool children. This will help children experience a smoother transition from nursery to P1.

Teachers in the school and practitioners in the nursery work well with children to identify appropriately their achievements in and out of school. They should continue with plans to ensure children can speak about the skills they develop through their learning experiences. This should help children understand more fully, how these skills can be applied to learning, life and work.

The headteacher and staff should improve further approaches to assessment to continue to improve children's attainment and achievement.

Overall, staff need more time to improve approaches to assessment of children's learning to improve children's attainment and achievement.

The headteacher previously introduced an assessment calendar but this has not been fully embedded. The acting headteacher should now work with staff to agree a clear and consistent approach to assessing children's learning. This should help teachers gather the right information on children's attainment and achievement for the whole curriculum. This will support the acting headteacher and teachers to gather information that captures fully children's skills, attributes and capabilities. Teachers should continue to develop their understanding and use of assessment information. They should link this more closely to their planning for children's learning. This should help teachers ensure that planning accounts better for the age and stage of all children. This will help children improve their overall attainment and achievements.

Teachers are beginning to use data effectively to support improvements in learning. For example, teachers have begun to use data to make decisions on how best to improve children's writing skills in the upper school. This is motivating and engaging children in their learning and improving their application of skills and overall achievement. The acting headteacher, supported by the local authority, should continue to work with teachers to develop effective approaches to using information about children's learning. This should support further teachers' decision making around planning for children's learning.

The acting headteacher and teachers are enthusiastic about taking forward plans to engage in activities to develop a shared and consistent understanding of children's progress in learning. They should do this by working together in school and with colleagues from other schools. This should strengthen teachers' confidence in making robust professional judgements about children's attainment and strengthen further their understanding of national standards.

**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 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 one year 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.

Fraser Gillan
HM Inspector

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