

2 June 2026

Dear Parent/Carer

In April 2025, HM Inspectors published a letter on Airdrie Academy. The letter set out a number of areas for improvement which we agreed with the school and North Lanarkshire Council. Recently, as you may know, we visited the school again. During our visit, we talked to young people 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 young people's learning and achievements. This letter sets out what we found.

Senior leaders should work with middle leaders and staff to improve approaches to monitoring and evaluating the work of the school in key areas such as raising attainment and inclusion. Clear, streamlined leadership responsibilities are required to progress school improvement at an increased pace.

The school has made clear progress in this area for improvement.

The headteacher has worked well with senior leaders to clarify their areas of responsibility and strategic leadership across the school. This clarity is helping them to support principal teachers and class teachers more effectively.

Teachers now work together more closely to improve learning for all young people. Most teachers are using an agreed lesson structure effectively. Young people feel teachers are more consistent in the activities and tasks used in lessons. In the majority of lessons, teachers plan paired and group activities. This is having a positive impact on young people's learning. Young people's learning is set at the right level for them, which helps them to enjoy their lessons.

Staff meet regularly to review young people's progress using clearer and more useful data. Teachers use a whole-school tracker to plan support for young people and to ensure they are on track with their learning. Staff are using information about additional support needs more effectively to plan learning. This is helping young people to enjoy lessons which are more suited to their needs.

Staff across the school need to develop a shared understanding of high-quality planning, learning, teaching and assessment. Young people should experience more engaging, motivating and consistently positive learning experiences.

The school has made good progress in this area of improvement.

Most lessons now start with activities that help young people recall earlier learning and settle quickly. Most teachers explain the purpose of learning in clear ways and give advice that helps young people understand how they can be successful in their learning. An increasing number of teachers link what is being learned in school with real-life contexts.

Most teachers use questions well to check young people's knowledge and understanding. A few teachers use questions very effectively to help young people think more deeply about topics and ideas. The majority of teachers now offer more choice in learning, which helps young people become more creative and motivated.

Young people benefit from lessons that are more active, well-paced and suitably challenging. Most teachers give helpful feedback through discussions with young people. Some teachers plan strong self- and peer-assessment activities, especially in the senior phase. Teachers are using a wider range of ways they check on the progress of young people. They are making better use of this information to plan appropriate lessons and courses.

Senior leaders should ensure that staff are planning appropriately, to meet the needs of all young people who require additional support with their learning. Staff should develop a greater understanding of their responsibilities in relation to inclusion and attendance.

The school has made clear progress in this area of improvement.

A new whole-school tracking system is giving all teachers easy access to important information about each young person. This includes advice on the different types of support that young people may need. Teachers are using this information well. It has helped them to develop a greater understanding of how they can support inclusion and young people's attendance. As a result, lessons are becoming more targeted and better meet the needs of more learners. Staff use a wider range of ways to support young people who have barriers to learning.

Young people now have more opportunities to influence school life through groups like the S1-3 pupil parliament. Young people have made important contributions to improve behaviour and improve their understanding of equality. They are also helping shape a new anti-bullying policy. The school is continuing to create a more inclusive learning environment by including lessons about promoting young people's rights and learning about difference.

Senior leaders should work with staff to raise attainment for all young people across the school. All staff need to ensure more effective approaches are in place to identify and support young people at risk of under-achievement.

The school has made appropriate progress in this area of improvement.

There are clear improvements in literacy and numeracy achievement by the end of S3. Senior leaders have used targeted staffing and funding to support young people at risk of lower attainment, leading to improved outcomes. Almost all young people leave school with at least Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) level 4 awards in literacy and

numeracy. In a number of important areas, young people's attainment is now in line with that of similar young people in other schools.

Attainment across S4 to S6 shows improving trends, with more young people achieving relevant awards at different SCQF levels. Curriculum changes and better use of the tracker are helping teachers plan courses that better meet learners' needs. Senior leaders aim for all young people to secure their best possible qualifications, and improvements are seen across each of the year groups in the senior phase.

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

Susan McDade
HM Inspector

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