

25 August 2026

Dear Parent/Carer

In April 2026, a team of HM Inspectors of Education visited Balmedie Primary School and Nursery Class. During our visit, we talked to parents/carers and children and worked closely with the headteacher and staff.

The inspection team found the following strengths in the school's work.

- Across the school and nursery class, children are polite, well-behaved and friendly. They are welcoming of visitors and very keen to talk about their learning and achievements. They are confident, articulate and capable. They are ready to help improve their school and nursery.
- Staff in the school and nursery build warm, caring and nurturing relationships with children, families and each other. They want the best for children and are enthusiastic and motivated to improve outcomes for children.
- The acting headteacher provides strong and purposeful leadership for the school community. He is well supported by the depute headteachers and the senior early years practitioner. Together, they have united the staff team and provide effective support and challenge to improve the school.

The following areas for improvement were identified and discussed with the headteacher and a representative from Aberdeenshire Council.

- With support from the local authority, senior leaders should take prompt action to raise attainment in literacy and numeracy. They should support staff across the school and nursery to raise their expectations of what children can achieve.
- Senior leaders should continue to work with staff, children and parents to strengthen further approaches to school improvement planning. They should ensure that all improvement actions focus clearly on the needs of children and lead to improved outcomes for them.
- Senior leaders and staff should ensure children experience their full entitlements to a Curriculum for Excellence. Staff in the school and nursery should develop a clear curriculum framework that reflects fully children's health and wellbeing, their needs, rights and interests.
- Senior leaders and staff need to continue to improve the quality of learning, teaching and assessment across the school and nursery. Children are ready to take on more responsibility to lead their own learning.

- Senior leaders and staff must adopt high quality approaches to help children understand their own health and wellbeing. Across the school and nursery, staff should develop further their approaches to assessing children's wellbeing.

We gathered evidence to enable us to evaluate the school's work using four quality indicators from [How good is our school \(4th edition\)](#). Quality indicators help schools, local authorities and inspectors to judge what is working well and what needs to be improved. Following the inspection of each school, the Scottish Government gathers details of our evaluations to keep track of how well Scottish schools are doing.

Here are HMIE's evaluations for Balmedie Primary School

Quality indicators for the primary school	Evaluation
Leadership of change	satisfactory
Learning, teaching and assessment	satisfactory
Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion	satisfactory
Raising attainment and achievement	weak
Descriptions of the evaluations are available from: How good is our school (4th edition) Appendix 3: The six-point scale	

We gathered evidence to enable us to evaluate the ELC's work using three quality indicators from the [Quality improvement framework for the early learning and childcare sectors](#).

Quality indicators for the nursery class	Evaluation
Curriculum	weak
Learning, teaching and assessment	weak
Wellbeing, inclusion and equality	weak

A more detailed document called Summarised Inspection Findings (SIF) will be available on the HMIE website at: [Reports page | Inspection reports | HMIE](#)

What happens next?

As a result of our inspection findings we think that the school needs additional support and more time to make necessary improvements. We will liaise with Aberdeenshire 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 Aberdeenshire Council the details of this inspection. When we return to inspect the school, we will write to you as parents/carers informing you of the progress the school has made.

Fraser Forsyth
HM Inspector

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