

17 March 2026

Dear Parent/Carer

In March 2025, HM Inspectors published a letter on Mosstowie Primary School. The letter set out a number of areas for improvement which we agreed with the school and Moray 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.

The acting headteacher has introduced several new and important approaches to school improvement in a short period. These developments are very recent and there has been insufficient time to demonstrate the overall impact of this work. The local authority needs to support the school to ensure that planned improvements are implemented, effective and sustained over time.

In August 2025, the acting headteacher at the time of the original inspection was appointed to the post of permanent headteacher. Since then, she has successfully led increasingly sustained improvement, with a high level of child and parent involvement. The local authority provides ongoing, appropriate support to the headteacher to ensure planned improvement is effective and sustained. This includes the provision of leadership training and development.

Parents welcome the significantly improved approaches to communication now in place. They feel better informed about their child's progress and learning and consulted about improvement priorities. Partnership working with parents has increased and community members are actively encouraged to support the work of the school. This is enhancing wider achievement opportunities for children through, for example, the introduction of a school orchestra and football club. Parents and children particularly welcome the increasingly strong emphasis on inclusion promoted by the headteacher. This ensures that the opportunities provided are open to all children.

All staff members have leadership roles linked closely to school improvement. Their engagement in professional learning is strengthening the effectiveness of areas of development, such as outdoor learning. In addition to staff leadership roles, every child is a member of a school committee. Children value the leadership opportunities these provide and speak confidently about the range of skills they develop through their involvement. They are proud of the difference they are making to their school and feel that their voice is heard, for example, through their promotion of sustainability and health and wellbeing.

The acting headteacher and all staff, with the support of the local authority, need to improve approaches to evaluating the work of the school. Their self-evaluation must be robust and based on high-quality evidence.

The headteacher has made significant progress in engaging all staff, children and parents in regular, meaningful self-evaluation. Staff now make effective use of a range of appropriate self-evaluation tools. This is enabling them to engage more regularly in self-evaluation activities, deepening the quality of their professional discussion. Children's ability to reflect on their school experience has also improved. The headteacher's regular use of child-friendly self-evaluation tools during whole school assemblies is improving children's ability to provide accurate feedback about the quality of their experiences.

Staff welcome the introduction of a comprehensive quality assurance calendar and the structure this provides. The headteacher and teachers carry out lesson observations, and this supports increasingly consistent practice in learning and teaching across the school. The provision of timely feedback from these observations enables staff, as a team, to focus on what is working well. As a result, staff are developing an increasingly accurate and robust understanding of the school's strengths. This includes the quality and impact of learning and teaching across the school.

The headteacher has improved the approaches used to track children's progress. Staff are now more aware of the range of data available to them to inform their work. They are now well placed to apply recent training on using data to monitor children's progress and the impact of improvement initiatives more effectively.

The acting headteacher and all staff, with the support of the local authority, need to ensure the overall quality of learning and teaching is consistently high across the whole school. This will help to support all children to make the best possible progress in their learning and raise attainment.

The quality and consistency of learning and teaching across the school have increased significantly. Staff have prioritised improving how well they share the purpose of learning with children across the school. Together, they have developed the 'Mosstowie Learning and Teaching Approach'. Children now have a much clearer understanding of what they are learning and how they will know that they have been successful. All teachers provide children with consistently high-quality verbal and written feedback, linked to identified steps to success. Most children now take greater responsibility for their own learning by identifying and discussing competently their next steps. Staff's questioning skills have also improved. They use questioning increasingly skilfully to encourage children to extend and apply their learning across a range of activities.

Teachers have successfully worked together to develop improved approaches to planning activities that best match the needs of groups and individuals. Teachers provide a range of appropriate activities and resources that provide children with independence and choice. This is supporting children to take increasing responsibility for aspects of their own learning.

A clear rationale for outdoor learning has been introduced. All children now experience regular opportunities to develop a range of skills through participation in high quality outdoor learning experiences. Children are highly motivated and engaged when learning outdoors. They speak regularly and confidently about the skills they are developing. Children's ability to identify and discuss the skills they are developing is now a key strength of the school.

A more robust approach to assessment is now in place, informed by staff's use of a clear assessment calendar and digital tracking system. Individual children's assessment folders clearly demonstrate the progress children are making. This increasingly well understood approach to assessment is enabling teachers to make more robust professional judgements about children's progress over time.

Teachers' approaches to planning learning are becoming more consistent. New planning formats have been introduced, and assessment is now a more integral part of planning. Teachers have begun to use a range of effective progression frameworks to inform their planning across all curricular areas.

Under the leadership of the headteacher, the inclusive, nurturing environment, underpinned by strong relationships has been further strengthened. The quality of planning for children with additional support needs has improved and is leading to better outcomes for children. Parents and children feel fully involved in the planning and review process. Staff are now more able to clearly identify the progress children are making.

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

Pamela Adamson
HM Inspector

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