

25 August 2026

Dear Parent/Carer

In May 2026, a team of HM Inspectors of Education visited Rathen School. 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.

- Children are caring, kind and supportive of each other and engage well in their learning. As a result, across the school, there is a positive learning ethos, underpinned by the school values.
- Teachers use skill displays well to help children understand and develop important learning behaviours, such as being resilient and focused in their learning. Children are increasingly able to talk about these skills in their learning. As a result, children are more confident in having a go in learning and seeking help in their learning if they need it.
- Across the school, teachers have developed an improved understanding of standards in writing. They improved their approaches to assessing and providing feedback to children in writing. This is supporting children well to recognise how they have been successful and their next steps, helping them improve their writing.
- Teachers have improved the progress being made by children at the upper stages of the school in literacy and numeracy. They are helping children build skills that prepare them well for moving on from primary school.

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

- Senior leaders and teachers should continue to develop approaches to high quality learning and teaching across the school. They should ensure all children are fully challenged in their learning to make the best possible progress.
- Senior leaders and teachers should continue to improve how they check the progress of all children, and in particular those at first level. Teachers should use assessment information more consistently to understand more clearly how all children are progressing in their learning.

We gathered evidence to enable us to evaluate the school's work using two 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 Rathen School

Quality indicators	Evaluation
Learning, teaching and assessment	good
Raising attainment and achievement	good
Descriptions of the evaluations are available from: How good is our school (4th edition) Appendix 3: The six-point scale	

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?

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

Emma McFarlane
HM Inspector

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