

1 February 2022

Dear Parent/Carer

Her Majesty's Inspectors of Education are currently carrying out visits to some schools and early learning and childcare settings across Scotland. When we wrote to you after the last inspection of Glass Primary School, we said that we would engage with the school to report on progress. We recently engaged in discussion with staff and the local authority and carried out a virtual meeting in Glass Primary School. Our engagement helped us learn more about how children and their families are being supported through the COVID-19 pandemic. We also heard about approaches that are working well to support children's health and wellbeing, learning and progress. We discussed with the headteacher and local authority officer the school's progress in taking forward the recommendations from our original inspection.

This letter sets out what we found during our visit.

The headteacher is providing strong leadership during the COVID-19 pandemic. During periods of remote learning, she ensured that children, their families and staff stayed connected and felt supported. Planned learning involved children and their families learning together at a time that suited individuals. Activities focused on using the outdoors, being 'fun' as well as literacy and numeracy. A range of approaches using digital technologies or letters and postcards helped keep children in touch. As a result, children looked forward to returning to school and managed the change very well.

In preparation for the return to school, the headteacher prioritised children's safety, their health and wellbeing as well as learning and teaching. Children's learning about keeping safe during the COVID-19 pandemic involved some creative ideas such as the use of an ultraviolet light to show children the importance of washing their hands properly to remove germs. Children now have greater ownership of their learning and how they share their knowledge, for example, through the use of a 'green screen'.

Leadership for learning across the school and nursery class is strengthened by close partnership working with schools in the cluster, other small school settings, the early years team and the local authority support networks. High standards of children's work is expected across the school and across all areas of the curriculum. These standards are supported by planning materials that build on what children already know. Staff are clearer in what children are able to do and how to plan for any gaps that they have in their learning.

The school has always been at the heart of the community and with outdoor learning an important part of the curriculum. When children returned to in-school learning, the headteacher focused on supporting wellbeing and identifying any gaps in learning. Routines have been re-established to help children feel secure. Children's writing and aspects of reading are now a focus. Each child's progress is carefully tracked and well planned learning encourages them to make choices in what they learn. The whole school community work closely together to implement the safe return to in-school learning. Children are developing their resilience skills to enable them to cope with different challenges.

The school staff team are supporting children's wellbeing. In the nursery, children use a range of objects such as soft toys to help them talk about their feelings. There are plans to build on this positive approach in the nursery with children in the primary class being able to talk about and understand their health and wellbeing.

Children, parents and staff were supported well to use digital technologies during the periods of remote learning. This use of digital technologies has continued and is making a positive difference to children's learning.

As requested, Aberdeenshire Council provided us with an oral report on the school's progress since the last inspection. This report was shared with Education Scotland virtually.

What happens next?

The school has been responding well to the challenges resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. These have had a significant impact on the work of the school. Staff are implementing plans to support recovery. Staff have addressed the recommendations from the original inspection successfully. As a result, we will make no more visits to the school in connection with the original inspection. Aberdeenshire Council will continue to inform parents about the school's progress as part of its usual arrangements for reporting on the quality of its education service.

Elizabeth C Montgomery
HM Inspector