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Dear Parent/Carer

Braehead Primary School
West Dunbartonshire Council

Recently, as you may know, my colleagues and I visited and inspected your child's school. Throughout our visit, we talked to many parents and children and we worked closely with the headteacher and staff. We wanted to find out how well children were learning and achieving and how well the school supported children to do their best. The headteacher shared with us the school's successes and priorities for improvement. We looked at some particular aspects of the school's recent work including, how well it is improving teaching approaches and children's learning experiences across the school. As a result, we were able to find out how good the school was at improving children's education. I would now like to tell you what we found.

How well do children learn and achieve?

We found that children are learning and achieving well. Overall, your children are motivated and eager to learn. They contribute confidently to activities and work well individually, in pairs and groups including, for example, in the 'Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory' topic. In some classes, children take responsibility for aspects of their own learning and evaluate their own work. This practice now needs to be extended to all classes. Staff use a variety of learning and teaching approaches and activities effectively to support children's learning, particularly at the early stages. In most classes, teachers consult children when planning projects and link the work to children's interests, building on what the children already know. Children are gaining a range of skills by participating in school and out-of-school activities. For example, they participate enthusiastically in the Christmas show and community events. They are learning to be responsible through roles, such as the Pupil Council, buddies for younger children, the eco committee and the 'Braehead Allstars'. A few children have won awards for sporting and other activities. The school increases children's confidence by celebrating their achievements regularly in different ways including, for example, on their 'wall of fame'. Children have improved their school environment and the local community. As a result, they gained a green flag from Eco-Schools Scotland.

Across the school, children are making good progress in English language and mathematics. Most children listen very well to each other and to their teachers. At the early stages, most children are developing very good listening and talking skills as a result of active learning approaches. At the upper stages, most are good at discussing texts and are confident talking to the whole class. They read well in different areas of the curriculum and are interested in reading. They write well when engaged in motivating contexts for writing. The school should

¹ This is a service for deaf users. Please do not use this number for voice calls as this will not connect.

build on these approaches in English Language for all children. In mathematics, active learning approaches help maintain children's interest and motivation. Staff apply real-life contexts successfully to give children an understanding of how their mathematical knowledge and skills can be used. Overall, children are making good progress in classwork in a range of curriculum areas.

How well does the school support children to develop and learn?

All staff know the children and their families well and provide a very high level of pastoral care and support. In most lessons, children complete their tasks and activities successfully. At times, tasks and activities need to be more demanding and provide greater challenge. The school has a purposeful and calm atmosphere. Children enjoy school and have positive relationships with staff. Learning assistants and clerical staff provide helpful support and the support for learning teacher provides well-planned support for groups and individuals. Staff work together successfully to support children who require additional support in their learning. At P1, the quality of support children receive is enhanced by parent helpers. Staff have made a good start to improving literacy, numeracy, enterprise and science by using Curriculum for Excellence. They are working to develop other areas in a similar way. They have connected learning in different areas so that children can apply and practise skills in different contexts. At the early stages, children make a positive start to learning through active approaches which enable them to choose from a wide range of activities. Pastoral transition arrangements between P7 and Dumbarton Academy are very well organised but curriculum links need to be improved.

How well does the school improve the quality of its work?

We are confident that the school can continue to improve the quality of its work. Staff have a strong commitment to improvement. The headteacher has developed a range of self-evaluation approaches that are clearly improving learning and teaching. These approaches include a helpful and succinct framework for improvement for all staff to use. The principal teacher supports the headteacher effectively and carries out her remit well. Staff are sharing ideas and good practice informally including, by working regularly with staff in other schools. The headteacher works closely with teachers to track and monitor children's progress and to identify children who require additional support in their learning. Children discuss and evaluate their learning targets with staff regularly as part of their learning conversations. As a result of these discussions, they set targets to improve their learning. Whilst children are self-assessing their work appropriately in a few lessons, this needs to be done more consistently in all lessons. Overall, the school is well placed to continue its improvement.

This inspection of your school found the following key strengths.

- Children are confident and courteous.
- The learning environment is caring and supportive.
- Staff and parents work well together to help children in their learning.
- The headteacher's leadership is improving the quality of children's learning experiences.

We discussed with staff and the education authority how they might continue to improve the school. This is what we agreed with them.

- Continue to improve children's learning and achievement through greater challenge.
- Continue to develop the curriculum further by using Curriculum for Excellence.

What happens at the end of the inspection?

We are satisfied with the overall quality of provision. We are confident that the school's self-evaluation processes are leading to improvements. As a result, we will make no further visits in connection with this inspection. The local authority will inform parents about the school's progress as part of the authority's arrangements for reporting to parents on the quality of its schools.

Hakim Din
HM Inspector

Additional inspection evidence, such as details of the quality indicator evaluations, for your school can be found on the Education Scotland website at <http://www.hmie.gov.uk/ViewEstablishment.aspx?id=6609&type=2>

Please contact us if you want to know how to get the report in a different format, for example, in a translation. You can contact us at enquiries@educationscotland.gsi.gov.uk or write to us at BMCT, Education Scotland, Denholm House, Almondvale Business Park, Almondvale Way, Livingston EH54 6GA.

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