

Your Ref:

Our Ref: Stewarty/Primary/Minnigaff

08 October 2018

Children, Young People & Lifelong Learning

122-124 Irish Street

Dumfries

DG1 2PB

To:

**All Parents and Carers of Pupils at
Minnigaff Primary School**

Any enquiries please contact

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Dear Parent / Carer

LETTER REPORTING ON PROGRESS OF MINNIGAFF PRIMARY SCHOOL SINCE EDUCATION SCOTLAND REPORT OF AUGUST 2017.

Minnigaff Primary School was inspected by Education Scotland in May 2017. The inspection focussed on: The inspection focussed on: leadership of change; learning, teaching and assessment; ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion and children's attainment and achievements.

As part of the quality reporting arrangements of Children, Young People and Lifelong Learning, Dumfries and Galloway Council, I am writing to inform you of the progress made by Minnigaff Primary School since the publication of the Education Scotland report in August 2017. The report highlighted four main aspects for development. This letter sets out actions taken by the school in addressing these points.

Staff should develop their assessment, monitoring and tracking arrangements further to support learning and improving attainment. These need to focus on clear smart targets and include regular dated evaluations of latest and best progress.

The school has implemented a more robust tracking system in Literacy and Numeracy providing early identification of need, supporting pupils and increasing the pace of learning in classrooms. This ensures that the leadership team and staff have a clear view of pupil progress towards achievement of a level. Termly tracking meetings now take place, where staff are beginning to make use of predictions to ensure pace, challenge and support within the classrooms. The school will now work towards developing this tracking and monitoring system to encompass all areas of the curriculum.

The Comprehensive Reading System has been introduced to support raising attainment in reading. Staff will monitor and evaluate the impact of this throughout this session.

Learning and teaching observations, led by the leadership team, indicate that targets set within lessons are clear, relevant and provide improved pace and challenge for most pupils.

Staff engage in Pupil Learning Portfolio (PLP) consultations ensuring that there is a consistent and clear understanding of their purpose. Staff and pupils link PLP learning targets to curricular areas being moderated, relevant benchmarks and writing criteria. This gives staff and learners a clearer pathway to success and a greater understanding of the skills and knowledge being taught. Most pupils are now able to discuss their learning pathways in Literacy and Numeracy concepts. Most pupils are able to transfer these skills across the curriculum.

The school should continue with its plans to develop staff's shared understanding of moderation procedures and standards, especially in literacy and numeracy, in order to ensure accurate monitoring and tracking of progress. Staff need to have more opportunities to moderate standards at all levels within and beyond the cluster.

The school continues to develop its moderation framework to ensure a shared understanding of procedures and standards. Staff jointly plan assessment activities and moderate aspects of Literacy, Numeracy and Health & Wellbeing, taking cognizance of benchmarks and pupil progression.

The Headteacher has invited Cluster colleagues to become part of the school's moderation process and has developed a Headteacher group within Glow, where examples of moderation frameworks and annotated exemplars of assessment are shared and discussed.

One member of staff attended a Local Authority organised moderation event to engage in professional dialogue regarding the moderation process with colleagues across the region. Disseminating this information to staff and the resulting professional dialogue has led to a greater understanding of holistic assessment approaches and has informed the planning stage of school-based moderation activities.

The school will continue to review and monitor its moderation procedures and continue to seek opportunities to moderate beyond the Cluster.

Continue to improve attainment, achievement and the use of digital learning further.

The school's end of year Achievement of a Level data indicates a significant improvement in almost all areas of Literacy and Numeracy assessed. Implementation of specific interventions based on data has supported this improvement. The Headteacher, Principal Teacher and staff will continue to use data and a range of evidence to support timely interventions and relevant use of Pupil Equity Funding. The School will implement a Visible Learning Programme and a variety of interventions funded through Pupil Equity Funding to support continued improvement in attainment and achievement and to provide equity and excellence for all pupils.

The school has implemented its Developing the Young Workforce Policy to provide opportunities for pupils to develop employability skills. Making links with Citizenship Groups and Careers Week improved participation opportunities for pupils and promoted engagement with our wider communities to enhance future opportunities for pupils.

In developing digital learning, almost all staff have had Green Screen training, Scratch Coding training and have attended Sumdog training. Developing staff confidence in digital skills has provided improved opportunities for pupils to develop digital technology skills and strategies.

The Headteacher and Principal Teacher have worked with a member of the RAiSE team to begin developing the school's Digital Learning leading to training opportunities for staff. The Headteacher has enrolled the school with the Digital Schools Award scheme and in conjunction with staff completed the initial self-evaluation leading to a more focused improvement plan. Links with a Digital School have been made and the leadership team will make a planned learning visit to this school.

The Headteacher and staff will now make use of Education Scotland's Learning for Sustainability self-evaluation toolkit to ensure a more focused approach to digital learning as part of learning for sustainability, leading to increased attainment and achievement in this area.

The Headteacher, Principal Teacher and staff should continue to develop strong links with parents and partners in the wider community to enhance outcomes further for all learners.

The school has engaged with the Parental Engagement Self Evaluation Toolkit and used this as a basis for identifying next steps to promote parental and community engagement throughout the year. The Headteacher surveyed parents regarding parental engagement and involvement through the Question of the Month. Parents responded asking for homework and activities that involve parental participation with their child, more curricular information, ways in which they could support their child and more opportunities for open days and assemblies. The school implemented almost all of the opportunities that parents requested, including Connect4 Family Fun homework, termly class curricular newsletters, a parental Maths booklet, assemblies to share learning and Question of the Month. These provided opportunities for parents to feedback views throughout the session. The school introduced Stay and Learn sessions, giving parents opportunities to join their children in learning activities within the classroom. The Headteacher shared her monthly calendar with parents and included Walk and Talk/ Coffee and Cake sessions to improve communication and enhance links with parents.

Staff issued termly newsletters detailing the learning taking place in class. Staff and pupils planned for, and implemented, events throughout the year to share learning and develop parental and community links, including School Birthday celebrations and a Royal Wedding. Increased and better communication with parents has provided opportunities for parents to become more aware of their children's learning. A better understanding of the curriculum and ways in which they can support this will continue to promote greater engagement with learning for parents and pupils.

Staff have planned and developed use of memorable experiences to raise attainment in Writing for all pupils. The school will continue to promote the use of memorable experiences to raise attainment and to promote opportunities for parental and community engagement and involvement.

The Headteacher, Principal Teacher and staff will continue to seek meaningful opportunities to further develop parental and partner links through engagement with Education Scotland

document: Engaging Parents and Families, a Toolkit for Practitioners, Section 3:
Home/School/Partnership Settings.

Minnigaff Primary School demonstrates a good capacity for future improvement. This is the result of the hard work and commitment of the Headteacher, staff and children. I wish to congratulate all within the school community on their progress over the last year.

Yours sincerely

Gillian Brydson
Acting Director Children, Young People and Lifelong Learning