

Your Ref:

Skills, Education and Learning Directorate

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Our Ref: DISTRICT\INFO\QI\INDICES\ES\REPORTS\
NITHSDALE\AMISFIELD PS PS\LET001-GB\EG

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To:

Any enquiries please contact:

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

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Dear Parent / Carer

LETTER REPORTING ON PROGRESS OF AMISFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL SINCE EDUCATION SCOTLAND REPORT OF 30TH APRIL 2019

Amisfield Primary School was inspected by Education Scotland in January 2019. 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 Skills, Education and Learning Directorate, Dumfries and Galloway Council, I am writing to inform you of the progress made by Amisfield Primary School since the publication of the Education Scotland report in April 2019. The report highlighted two main aspects for development. This letter sets out actions taken by the school in addressing these points.

Ensure that children experience a broad curriculum and staff develop a shared understanding of national standards to raise attainment further.

Almost all children now have a better understanding of the different subject areas across the curriculum. Teachers have made the intended learning specific within tasks so that the children are aware of learning different skills such as social subjects or science when engaging in interdisciplinary learning activities. The teachers also work across classes so they deliver a different curricular area to the other class; for example, through Literacy in the form of Modern Languages and Expressive Arts through Music. The parents enjoyed seeing how the children could share a wide range of skills through the Egyptian interdisciplinary learning sharing afternoon. All children could talk confidently about technology, art and design, science, social subjects and through their Egyptian topic - hieroglyphics.

All P4-7 pupils were given opportunities to further develop their listening and talking skills in specialist vocabulary for different purposes, for example, developing presentation and

debating skills in class activities. The pupils also focussed on bias and developing informed views through the implementation of 'First News' tasks. The purchase of First News i-Hub allowed the children to explore and answer questions about current news articles online. Most children are able to do this successfully. First News also addressed the need to continue to develop the pupils' understanding of the increasingly complex and unfamiliar ideas presented in non-fiction texts.

Teachers of both classes undertook practitioner enquiry and research through the development of reading projects. An example of this is the 'Raising attainment in reading in a multi-composite setting' project taken forward through the education authority's Introducing School Leadership professional development course. The intended outcomes of the project were to increase reading age in P3-P7, improve reading fluency and attitudes towards reading. Accelerated Reading results show that almost all children improved their reading age. The children made purchases for new school readers for the library and as a result, attitudes towards reading improved for almost all children. Reading fluency will be assessed on pupils' return to school as part of the project. Attitude towards reading was also the focus of another research project across P1 to P7, developed through the introduction of 'Literacy Boxes'. The results show that when all children were involved in selecting new genres, almost all were more engaged in the independent reading tasks.

Cluster Collegiate sessions over the course of the year helped all staff to develop and increase their confidence in assessing aspects of literacy and numeracy through focused and rich-tasks assessments. Staff worked on moderating baseline literacy assessments to ensure shared standards and expectations. Literacy interventions were identified through this moderation process and meetings took place across the cluster to share progress with other practitioners through professional dialogue.

Improve children's skills in independent learning. Ensure appropriate pace and challenge of learning taking greater account of what children already know.

Through the reading projects, all P1 – P3 children independently chose their own genres of books for the Literacy Boxes. In P4-7, all children selected books to order and purchase for new group readers. Both opportunities provided almost all children with choice in reading material and resulted in improved independent learning in reading.

All P4-7 pupils were involved in creating their own success criteria, especially in writing tasks. Across the partnership, staff and children worked on developing child-friendly writing criteria (Early-Third Level). Almost all children are familiar with the criteria and aware of the expectations of the next level, thus increasing expectations and challenge in learning.

All children participated in independent learning through Soft Start activities or Independent Literacy sessions every morning; for example, Reading Round-Up stations around the class to encourage independent learning, through use of play, digital learning, First News, comprehension tasks and independent reading activities. This allowed all pupils to engage independently in activities of their choice whilst the class teacher focused on working with a particular group.

To ensure appropriate challenge in numeracy, opportunities were provided for a targeted group of P6/7 learners to understand and apply number in real-life contexts. All staff ensured appropriate support and ideas from moderation tasks linked to rich-task

assessments. It is intended that all children will experience breadth across organisers and can use their learning to put maths in context to solve real problems. This approach has worked for almost all children.

Amisfield 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
Director Skills, Education and Learning