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To All Parent/Carers

Dear Parent/Carer

### **Airyhall School**

In November 2009 HM Inspectors visited the school and wrote a report of their findings. In the report, they recognised the many strengths of the school and recommended that future developments focus on improving opportunities for children in the nursery to develop their skills in literacy and numeracy and that learning across the school is suitably challenging for all children.

Since then officers from the local authority have regularly visited the school to find out how well the children are learning and achieving and how the school is continuing to support the children to do their best. As a result we are now able to report on the improvements made.

#### **How well do children learn and achieve?**

There is a strong, positive ethos across all aspects of the work of the school. In all classes children enjoy positive relationships with their teachers and respond very well to the high expectations which are set for them. They are motivated, well-behaved and enthusiastic learners.

There have been improvements made to the transition process between nursery and primary one, with a particular focus on supporting children's literacy and numeracy. In the nursery classes, children now use 'floor books' to plan and lead their learning in partnership with staff. The 'floor books' provide a helpful record for sharing learning with parents and visitors to the school. In all classes children are becoming increasingly involved in making decisions about what and how they learn and they are developing confidence to talk about their learning experiences to a variety of audiences.

Lessons across the school often feature group challenges which incorporate the use of 'critical skills' and these, along with enrichment group activities and whole school 'science challenges', are helping all children to think independently and to apply their learning in new and unfamiliar situations. Working within multi-aged 'family groups', and using the outdoor environment, children are provided with opportunities to learn across subjects and stages and this further promotes team work. Through 'personal learning planning' children are able to share and recognise their progress and the aspects which they need to improve upon. They also share this with their parents and carers.

Across the school, children demonstrate strong literacy skills. Almost all children love reading and enjoy visits to the school and community library. They participate very well in discussions by sharing their ideas and responding appropriately to other children's views. In cross-curricular work, children write reports, create posters and complete surveys. Their work is usually well presented with careful attention to good handwriting and correct spelling.

Children across the school are actively involved in helping to improve the way they learn. They also share and celebrate their learning and achievements with the whole school community. They contribute effectively to opportunities to develop as responsible citizens, for example through International Links, Healthy Living and ECO groups.

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

Class teachers know their children very well and plan activities and tasks to meet their needs. A recent review of the support provision in the school, involving working closely with parents and carers, has enabled staff to focus additional support to those children who require it most. Mental maths approaches have been reviewed and improved. These now include a greater focus on active learning, breadth and the application of learning within real life contexts.

The school has continued to move forward with implementing Curriculum for Excellence. A number of events are organised through the year for parents and members of the community to find out about and share in the work of the school. Working together staff, in partnership with parents and partners, have created a range of interesting and challenging science activities. Homework is regular, well planned and carefully linked to the learning which takes place in school. The pace and challenge of learning have increased as a result of the changes that have taken place.

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

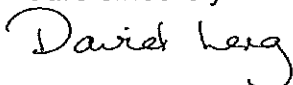
Since publication of the inspection report in January 2010, teachers have continued to work hard to improve how they teach and how children learn. Working together staff have developed strategies to share and agree standards within Curriculum for Excellence levels particularly in writing. Self-evaluation is ongoing, rigorous and embedded in the work of the school.

Then newly appointed headteacher has a supportive and collaborative approach to taking development forward in the school. The depute headteachers fulfil their remits very well and with the headteacher provide very strong leadership and support for the school. The senior management team continue to gather and evaluate data to help them determine what is working well in the school and what could be improved further. Through the introduction of a new management information system, staff are now able to record, track and access children's data more efficiently.

### **What happens next?**

The school has continued to make very good progress since HM Inspectors visited in November 2009 and all aspects of the recommendations have been fully addressed. The newly appointed headteacher has a clear vision for the school with an effective plan to progress future improvement. As a result there will be no further visits made in connection with this follow-through report.

Yours sincerely



**David Leng**  
Acting Director