



## Head Teacher End of Year Letter

### Lanark Primary School & ELC

June 2020

I bring this report to you at what has been a very strange and often difficult ending to our school year. The COVID-19 epidemic has meant that we have not been able to finish our school year in the way we would have wanted to, either in terms of improvement planning, our planned events for the last term or the simple interactions between friends, colleagues and children we have so often taken for granted. This has been particularly difficult for our children in transition, both those starting with us in primary one and those leaving us as they move to Lanark Grammar School. We have been able to hold a number of online/virtual transition events as well as facilitate visits to the school for our incoming P1s and outgoing P7s, many thanks to all the staff, parents and learners for making this happen. It has been so lovely to see some of our youngest and oldest pupils, as they take the next steps in their learning journey- we wish you every success!

As 'lockdown' began, the teachers all became students again as they learned to navigate their way around Google Classroom. Alongside this, we were able to set up a dedicated ICT website and email, as well as an online mailing system for sharing activities with our ELC learners. We also continued to provide 'paper' based home learning packs for each month of lockdown- which we know has been well received. We have now issued all letters to learners in the ELC and school, sharing keyworkers, teachers, groups and classes. Of course, SLC will continue to look at the guidance coming out to establishments nationally, and changes to the provision detailed in these letters will be shared with you once confirmed. Everyone's hope is to have all #TeamLPS back together as soon as we can.

As we look forward to the 'summer holidays', it is important to look back on the session as a whole- and what a session it has been!

We said 'goodbye' to Lynn Wingate and Claire Rogers and thanked them for their support over the years as joint chairs of Lanark Primary School Parent Council. I am sure that all members of the current Parent Council and the wider Parent Forum will join me in thanking them for all their hard work and support over the years!

With the retirement of Lynn and Claire, came the appointment of our new Parent Council Office Bearers. We welcomed Shirley Cathcart as our new PC Chair alongside Jan Towers as Treasurer, and Victoria Jack as Secretary. All three have taken to their new roles brilliantly, in order to provide the best for our learners at Lanark Primary School and ELC. Many thanks also to the tireless work of our Lanimer Committee- we are looking forward to continuing our strong partnership.

### **School Roll and Staffing**

Our school roll remained around 282 for the session. We welcomed Mr Jamie MacDonald to P3 for the year as an additional teacher. Miss Reid returned from her maternity leave in August 2019 and Mrs Lumsden returned in March 2020. Mrs Forsyth began her maternity leave in April 2020 and has now welcomed baby Murray into the world. Mrs Dunlop will begin her maternity leave in July 2020 and we are extremely lucky to have been allocated Miss MacLeod for the year to cover this absence.

We also welcome two more newly qualified teachers to #TeamLPS in Session 2020 – 21, Miss Melissa Gibson and Miss Anna McCubbin.

In our ELC, we welcomed Miss Chantelle Geddes and Miss Sophie Walker to the team. Miss Yvonne Graham reduced her working pattern from five days to four days. In the ELC, we provided both 1140 hours as well as part-time placements to our early learners. We now move to providing 1140 hours for all learners in the ELC and can't wait to have them back with us again in August.

## **School Life and Events**

In November 2019, we welcomed a team of inspectors from Education Scotland to our school and ELC. During the visit, the inspection team found that the school was well led and managed by the Head Teacher, Depute Head Teacher and Principal Teacher. They reported that our children are polite and well behaved, and that they were enthusiastic and confident about their learning. They praised the highly effective teamwork in the school and mentioned the effectiveness of our shared understanding of wellbeing which leads to children feeling safe, included and involved.

The inspection team identified two areas for improvement. These are to continue to raise attainment in literacy and numeracy, and to develop our self-evaluation processes in the ELC.

Across the session, we continued to share our learning with parents/carers and the wider school community in a number of ways. These included our Christmas nativities, class assemblies, Scots evening, musical performances, P7 Cooking Club, 'See Your Child at Work' days and Forest Kindergarten.

Our learners continued to take a lead role in school improvement through our Pupil Leadership Teams, House Captains, buddies and play-leaders.

We continued with our commitment to provide quality, regular extra-curricular clubs for all learners. This commitment was rewarded when we were nominated for a Clydesdale 'Sporting School of the Year' award. This exemplified the ongoing drive to ensure that sport and physical activity are at the heart of our planning. We believe that this will play an important part of our recovery planning for learners next session.

## **Improvement Planning**

In Session 2019-20, we made some progress towards our school improvement planning priorities. Understandably, we have not had the intended impact we had hoped for, with some key actions still outstanding. These will be detailed in our forthcoming Standards and Quality Report (August 2020). We have already begun the process of identifying our priorities for improvement for next session. We will do this by focusing on recovery planning- with a significant focus on Health and Wellbeing. We will continue to follow the most appropriate and up to date guidance from the local authority and the Scottish Government.

## **A Final Message for the Session**

Many thanks go once again to the wonderful Miss Elkin and Miss McMaster (SMT) alongside our fantastic teaching and early years staff, the brilliant Mrs Brown and the support staff team, you, our fabulous parents, the whole LPS community and many volunteers for supporting Lanark LPS & ELC on its continued journey of improvement. As mentioned during the recent inspection, "Lanark Primary School is a very welcoming, caring and inclusive school...relationships between all staff, children, parents and partners are very positive. They reflect the school values of good manners, learning, working hard, teamwork, responsibility, respect, trust and honesty, kindness and being active."

The last words must be saved for our fantastic children who continue to amaze, even in the face of adversity. As noted, "Children interact very well with each other and with staff. They show consideration and respect for others. They are resilient and have a 'can do' attitude during learning activities." This resilience will support them in their learning, both at home and when they return to their new/adapted learning environments, where we will once again be 'Learning Together, Growing Together'.

I hope that you all enjoy continued family time and are able to see more of your loved ones as 'lockdown' measures are eased.

Stay safe



**Farah Crook**

**Head Teacher**