

14 July 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

In February 2020, a team of inspectors from Education Scotland and the Care Inspectorate visited Dollar Academy. During our visit, we talked to parents/carers and children and young people, and worked closely with the Rector and staff. We gathered evidence to evaluate the quality of leadership and management, learning and teaching, boarding provision and children's and young people's success and achievements.

The inspection team found the following strengths in the school's work:

- The caring, family ethos across the school and boarding houses. Children and young people feel safe and very well looked after. They are known as individuals as a result of the staff's team approach to ensuring the health and wellbeing of all.
- The astute, highly effective leadership of the Rector. He has quickly gained the respect of the whole school community. Together with governors, he has a clear vision for the future development of the school. The very skilled and experienced senior promoted staff each carry out their roles with dedication. They make the most of the all-through context of the school and boarding houses, which enhances the genuine sense of community.
- Highly articulate, motivated and respectful children and young people. They are rightly very proud of their school and their many achievements, including at national and international levels.
- The outstanding range of co-curricular activities that provides enriching and memorable experiences for children and young people. Teachers are increasingly adopting creative approaches to learning and teaching.
- Highly successful approaches to supporting children and young people who require additional support in their learning or their wellbeing. The inclusive ethos in the school and boarding houses ensures that all learners who may have barriers to their learning can achieve their full potential.

The following areas for improvement were identified and discussed with the Rector.

- Across the school, continue to develop the use of data, assessment information and self-evaluation in order to help drive continuous improvement and to pinpoint next steps.
- Continue to empower children and young people to lead, and have a say in, their own learning.

We gathered evidence to enable us to evaluate the school's work using four quality indicators from [How good is our school? \(4th edition\)](#). Quality indicators help schools, local authorities and inspectors to judge what is working well and what needs to be improved.

Here are Education Scotland's evaluations for Dollar Academy

| Quality indicators | Evaluation |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|
| Leadership of change | very good |
| Learning, teaching and assessment | very good |
| Raising attainment and achievement | very good |
| Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion | very good |
| Descriptions of the evaluations are available from: How good is our school? (4th edition), Appendix 3: The six-point scale | |

Here are the Care Inspectorate's gradings for the boarding provision

| Care Inspectorate standards | Grade |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|
| How well do we support children's and young people's wellbeing? | good |
| How good is our leadership? | good |
| How good is our staff team? | very good |
| How good is our setting? | very good |
| How well is care and support planned? | very good |

During the previous Care Inspectorate inspection, the school had one recommendation. Action on this recommendation is discussed in the summary of inspection findings. As a result of this inspection, there are two areas for improvement.

- In order to ensure that the quality of care and support provided consistently achieves positive experiences throughout the service, the school should take action to address concerns identified. This is to ensure the quality of wellbeing is consistent with Health and Social Care Standard 3.19 which states "My care and support is consistent and stable because people work together well."

- The school should continue to build on systems of quality assurance and self- evaluation, including an impact evaluation to assure themselves of continued progress. This is to ensure that the quality of wellbeing is consistent with Health and Social Care Standard 4.19 which states “I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, with the organisation having robust and transparent quality assurance processes.

A more detailed document called Summarised Inspection Findings (SIF) will be available on the Education Scotland website at: <https://education.gov.scot/education-scotland/inspection-reports/reports-page/?id=2355> and the [Care Inspectorate website](#).

What happens next?

We are confident that the school has the capacity to continue to improve and so we will make no more visits in connection with this inspection. The Board of Governors will inform parents/carers about the school’s progress as part of its arrangements for reporting on the quality of the school’s provision.

A notification from the Care Inspectorate will be sent to the Provider to complete an action plan to address any Requirements and/or areas for improvement made as a result of this inspection.

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HM Inspector

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Care Inspector