

Summarised inspection findings

Foulford Primary School

Fife Council

25 February 2020

Key contextual information

Foulford Primary School and Nursery Class is a non-denominational school situated in the town of Cowdenbeath. Currently, the school has a roll of 375 children across 14 classes and a nursery with 77 children. There has been significant growth in the school community due to an increase in housing within the catchment area. The headteacher has been in post for three years. She is supported by two deputy headteachers who have responsibility for key areas of the school. There has also been significant change in the staff team over the past three years.

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

good

This indicator focuses on ensuring high-quality learning experiences for all children and young people. It highlights the importance of highly-skilled staff who work with children, young people and others to ensure learning is motivating and meaningful. Effective use of assessment by staff and learners ensures children and young people maximise their successes and achievements. The themes are:

- learning and engagement
- quality of teaching
- effective use of assessment
- planning, tracking and monitoring

- Relationships across Foulford Primary School are positive and respectful. Children are proud of their school. Staff worked collaboratively to develop the shared vision of 'one team one dream' which is promoting a positive environment for learning. The school's focus on developing approaches to 'Nurturing Positive Relationships' is helping children to embrace one of the school's values of being resilient. There are appropriate systems in place for those children who require additional support in their learning.
- Most children work well with each other, and engage appropriately in their learning. Most are able to describe the social skills they are developing, which help them to work well in pairs and groups. They are also beginning to be able to describe a range of ways to resolve difficulties with relationships. Children appreciate the recognition they receive from staff for their efforts and achievements in and out of school. There are helpful systems in place to celebrate children's successes. As planned, senior leaders should continue to work with parents to develop further their understanding of the school's processes for managing positive relationships and finding solutions to resolving difficulties.
- Teachers recognise the need to ensure learner participation is integral to day-to-day learning and teaching. There are examples of pupils playing an active part in decision making about improving their school environment. Children are keen to talk about their learning and are confident in explaining their learning tasks. A small group of staff participated in the local authority's 'Pupil Participation' working group to increase pupils' involvement in planning, leading and evaluating their learning. Those staff and children in the senior school worked together using 'How Good is OUR School?' to create the school's own 'continuum of learning'. Children use this in class to reflect on how their views are acted on. Teachers need to continue to support children to identify their next steps and evaluate their own progress in learning over time. They should use plenary sessions more effectively to help children to regularly reflect on their learning.

- In most classes, teachers' explanations and instructions are clear. In the majority of classes, children experience active, enjoyable learning which motivates and engages them well. Across the school, children have regular opportunities to learn independently and to work together. Most children share ideas and listen attentively to each other. In most lessons, teachers intervene appropriately to revisit learning intentions, check understanding and extend and support learning where necessary. Children need more planned opportunities to demonstrate their learning in new and unfamiliar contexts. In the majority of lessons, teachers use questioning effectively. They should continue to build on existing practice to increase the use of effective questioning across the school and develop further children's higher order thinking skills.
- In most classes, teachers plan learning appropriately to the needs of children. The recent focus on differentiation of learning is impacting positively on children's experiences. Teachers should continue to develop and improve differentiation within direct teaching sessions. In a few classes, staff use their observations and assessment of learning well to provide children with quality feedback, reinforce key learning points and adapt their planning. Teachers should extend this practice as part of their planned introduction of peer observations.
- Teachers and support staff work well collegiately to plan learning experiences within the different stages of the school. This has led to improved professional dialogue and a developing understanding of shared expectations. Teachers use short term planning responsively to meet the needs of most children. They plan an annual overview for all curricular areas and use local authority progression pathways to plan learning across the curriculum. They use a range of assessments, including standardised assessments, appropriately to support progress in children's learning, and plan for the learning needs of targeted children. With senior leaders, they track children's progress in literacy and numeracy using benchmarks and a skills progression. Teachers are not yet tracking children's progress across all curricular areas.
- The headteacher has a clear focus on improving how teachers support and challenge all learners including those with additional needs. She works well with senior leaders and support for learning staff to track and monitor the progress of children. All staff meet regularly and collaborate to identify children requiring additional support and challenge and plan appropriate interventions. Support for learning staff provide a helpful consultative role to help teachers implement identified interventions. Pupil support assistants make valuable contributions to planning and review meetings. Across the school, all staff work effectively as a team to develop their understanding of the different needs of children. They are proactive in seeking and accessing advice and support for children and their families from the Fife Pupil Support Service and other relevant partners. Universal target recording formats, pupil passports, individual learning plans and planning for improvement approaches provide a record of planned interventions and strategies. Senior leaders identify correctly the need to review and link together the range of quality assurance processes to create a more holistic approach to measuring the progress of children across the curriculum.

2.1 Safeguarding and child protection

- The school submitted self-evaluation information related to child protection and safeguarding. Inspectors discussed this information with relevant staff and, where appropriate, children. In addition, inspectors examined a sample of safeguarding documentation. At the time of the inspection, there were no identified areas for development.

3.2 Raising attainment and achievement

satisfactory

This indicator focuses on the school's success in achieving the best possible outcomes for all learners. Success is measured in attainment across all areas of the curriculum and through the school's ability to demonstrate learners' achievements in relation to skills and attributes. Continuous improvement or sustained high standards over time is a key feature of this indicator. The themes are:

- attainment in literacy and numeracy
- attainment over time
- overall quality of learners' achievement
- equity for all learners

- Overall, children's attainment in literacy and English and numeracy and mathematics is satisfactory.
- Data provided by the school for session 2018/19 shows that most children at early and first level and the majority of children at second level achieved expected Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) levels in literacy and English. Across the school, most children achieved the expected CfE levels in numeracy and mathematics. However, teachers' professional judgements of a level are not yet robust. Senior leaders need to continue to ensure they give clear guidance to teachers around expectations for all children through the continuous monitoring of pupil progress. This will support all teachers to raise expectations of what children produce which better reflects their ability.

Literacy and English

- Overall, attainment in literacy is satisfactory. The majority of children are making appropriate progress.

Listening and talking

- Attainment in listening and talking is satisfactory. At early level, most children listen well to instructions and talk confidently during direct teaching lessons. However, the majority of children need to develop skills of working in pairs and groups on more independent tasks. At first level, the majority of children take turns and contribute well when engaging with others in a group. At second level, the majority of children discuss confidently the skills required for solo talks and debates. More work is required to ensure all staff have appropriately high expectations of children's listening and talking skills.

Reading

- Attainment in reading is satisfactory. At early level, the majority of children read fluently and understand the main ideas of texts. They listen and respond well to stories. Teachers need to ensure that reading material is of an appropriate level of challenge for all children. At first level, the majority of children read fluently, using expression, and with an awareness of relevant punctuation. They talk confidently about their favourite authors and books but are unable to explain the difference between fiction and non-fiction texts. At second level, the majority of children identify the main idea of texts and read fluently. All children across the second level need to develop their higher-order reading skills. Good use is made of the school library and the local library to encourage children to read. However, more needs done to raise the profile of reading and encourage reading for pleasure. In addition, all staff need to develop a shared understanding of how to develop further children's reading skills.

Writing

- Attainment in writing is satisfactory. Teachers need to increase expectations of what children achieve in writing across the school. At early level, a few children write a few sentences independently making a good attempt to write unknown words. Overall, more children need further support to write independently. At first and second level, the majority of children discuss the features of writing required in a few genres such as letter writing. They have a good understanding of features of language appropriate to their stage. In addition, they are beginning to use these features in their writing. Across all levels, children need to write more frequently for a range of purposes. At second level, children need to increase the length of their writing to ensure they have given the reader all the relevant ideas and information.

Numeracy and mathematics

- Overall, children's attainment in numeracy and mathematics is satisfactory. The majority of children are making appropriate progress. Across the school, children need increased opportunities to apply their numeracy and mathematics skills across all aspects of the curriculum. Teachers should ensure also that there is appropriate breadth of numeracy and mathematics experiences which helps children to develop the wide range of skills necessary to support their progress.

Number money and measure

- At early level, the majority of children order all numbers forwards and backwards within the range of 0-20. They use appropriate mathematical symbols to create number stories and identify all coins to £2. They are less confident in subtracting mentally within 10, and sharing groups of items equally into smaller groups. At first level, the majority of children understand zero as a placeholder in whole numbers to 1000. They use appropriate mathematical language and apply a few strategies confidently to determine multiplication and division facts. Children at this stage need to develop a range of strategies across all operations to support them to carry out mental calculations. At second level, the majority of children are beginning to use and describe a range of strategies which support their mental calculations with whole numbers. They are less confident in their application of calculations linked to decimals. They calculate confidently durations of activities using both 12 and 24-hour notation. They would benefit from an increased focus on developing an understanding of the link between fractions, decimals and percentages.

Shape, position and movement

- At early level, the majority of children understand the language of position and direction and recognise common two-dimensional shapes and three-dimensional objects. They are less confident in describing shapes which relate to their properties. At first level, the majority of children know that a right angle is 90 degrees, and are beginning to develop confidence in identifying the properties of two-dimensional shapes and three-dimensional objects. However, they need increased exposure to the mathematical language used to describe accurately the properties of two-dimensional shapes and three-dimensional objects. At second level, the majority of children use appropriate mathematical language to describe different types of angles. They are less confident in describing the features of a circle and the link between the diameter and the radius.

Information handling

- At early level, the majority of children collect and organise accurately information for a specific purpose. They need to use this information to create displays which represent this data. At first level, the majority of children select and use the most appropriate way to gather and sort data for a given purpose. They are less confident in using a range of different methods to display and interpret information. At second level, the majority of children use the language of

probability appropriately to describe accurately the likelihood of simple events occurring. Children at this stage need to apply their developing skills in information handling across the curriculum.

Attainment over time

- Most children are making satisfactory progress over time, with a few children making good progress in literacy and numeracy. Teachers are becoming more confident in using a range of assessments including standardised assessments to support professional judgements on children's progress. The headteacher together with senior leaders make effective use of tracking information to monitor children's attainment over time. They meet regularly with teachers to review children's progress. They identify children requiring additional support and challenge in their learning which ensures children continue to make expected progress in literacy and numeracy. Senior leaders should continue to support teachers in accurately identifying achievement of a level to ensure overall attainment data is more robust.

Overall quality of learners' achievements

- The majority of children across the school access a wide range of achievements through active schools festivals, lunch time and after school clubs organised across the school year. A high number of children engage in a range of cultural, sports and physical activities which supports them to develop skills linked to resilience and teamwork. Staff celebrate children's achievements out of school through displays and at assemblies. The headteacher records children's wider achievements to ensure all children have opportunities and do not miss out. She tracks and monitors participation in both in-school achievements and out of school clubs to identify children at risk of missing out. Staff then use this information well to target and encourage children to participate in more activities. In moving forward, teachers should increase their ownership of tracking and monitoring children's wider achievements.

Equity for all learners

- All staff within the school are committed to reducing any gap in attainment as a result of children's socio-economic circumstances. They identify a wide range of interventions including those funded by Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) to support children's progress in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. This enables staff to provide increased targeted support for children. Staff are beginning to measure the impact of these interventions on children's attainment using a range of data. Senior leaders are proactive in engaging with a range of partners to remove barriers for children and their families. They have focused on improving attendance and have worked with partners to support this. This has led to increased attendance for those targeted groups of children as well as improved engagement from families themselves.

Other relevant evidence

- The headteacher has a clear understanding of the school's improvement journey and next steps for its continuing improvement. She is successful in developing positive relationships across the school and the wider community. The headteacher demonstrates strategic leadership and has clear aspirations for all children. She has successfully led the development of the school's positive ethos and established clear systems to support children's progress in learning.

Explanation of terms of quantity

The following standard Education Scotland terms of quantity are used in this report:

All	100%
Almost all	91%-99%
Most	75%-90%
Majority	50%-74%
Minority/less than half	15%-49%
A few	less than 15%

Other quantitative terms used in this report are to be understood as in common English usage.