

Summarised inspection findings

Glamis Primary School

Angus Council

28 March 2023

Key contextual information

Glamis Primary School and Early Learning and Childcare Class is an accessible, rural, non-denominational primary school catering for children from age three to 12 years. Children attend from the village of Glamis and surrounding farms and villages. The current roll is eight in the setting and 70 at the primary stages across three classes. Children benefit from a variety of well organised outdoor spaces and use of the Strathmore Estate.

Children and staff recovered very quickly following school closures for COVID-19. Attendance at school is above the national average. The headteacher, principal teacher and staff team have been in post for several years and children are benefitting from the continuity.

The school receives £8,575 in Pupil Equity Funding (PEF). Ninety-seven percent of children live in Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation deciles six and seven.

1.3 Leadership of change

very good

This indicator focuses on collaborative leadership at all levels to develop a shared vision for change and improvement which is meaningful and relevant to the context of the school within its community. Planning for continuous improvement should be evidence-based and linked to effective self-evaluation. Senior leaders should ensure the need for change is well understood and that the pace of change is appropriate to ensure the desired positive impact for learners. The themes are:

- developing a shared vision, values and aims relevant to the school and its community
- strategic planning for continuous improvement
- implementing improvement and change

- Glamis Primary School and Early Learning and Childcare Class is at the heart of the local community. All children benefit from the interest and involvement of the local community in their learning and wellbeing. Within the school, children are central to everything that is planned by staff. Their rights, wellbeing, achievement and learning underpin the improvement agenda. Skills for learning, life and work are the cornerstone of the school. This is ensuring learning is meaningful, interesting and fun.
- The school community demonstrates a strong affinity to the school values that have been in place for some time and refreshed recently. Children identify closely with their motto 'Aim High' and work hard to be the best they can be. Children and their parents appreciate the school values known as the gold standards. These values, 'be true, be kind, work hard, take care', are embedded in all aspects of learning across the school community.
- The headteacher is a skilled, strategic leader. He knows each child as an individual, their wellbeing and the progress they are making. Children share his determination through the Glamis statement that 'learning can take you anywhere.' The headteacher has built a passionate and committed staff team who are ambitious for children. They give readily of their time and talents to ensure children have the very best experiences staff are able to provide. The headteacher is supported ably by a skilled principal teacher. Both hold responsibility for their partner school, Eassie Primary School. As a senior leadership team, the headteacher and principal teacher lead by example. They provide high quality teaching in all classes. They empower staff and children to lead improvement across the school, for example, in reading. Senior leaders value and encourage opportunities for staff and children to learn and demonstrate key leadership skills. These include supporting and improving children's reading skills and running lunchtime groups.

- The long-serving staff team share a deep understanding of the school's context. They know families very well. During COVID-19 closures, staff deepened their relationships with families. A few of the successful approaches they devised for home learning continue to be used. These approaches include shorter bursts of teaching and being mindful of children's need to be active and creative during the day. These approaches help children to stay focused, complete their tasks and enjoy the learning process.
- The senior team and staff have established processes which enable them to identify very clearly what is working well. These processes support the team to build on their successes and address areas for improvement. Well-considered self-evaluation activities ensure adults and children have a voice. Parents and children share their views through surveys, the Parent Council and pupil-led groups across the school. The senior team works effectively with the school community to bring about a clear picture and helpful data about how well the school is performing. This is shared with the Parent Council to enable them to carry out their duties.
- The headteacher leads the pace of change skilfully across the school. He builds the confidence of staff and children to initiate new ideas and enrich the offer to all children. He works hard to ensure Glamis and Eassie are interconnected, enabling staff and children to work together and learn with and from each other.
- All teachers lead improvement activities in their classrooms. As a team, they continually refresh and build on their skills to ensure children's needs are met very well in a multi-composite setting. Teachers recognise their hard work is enabling them to realise the benefits to children in their wellbeing and attainment. Their positive teamwork and the right pace of change is supporting them to sustain the improvements they make over time. The principal teacher leads continuous improvement in the teaching of reading and writing very successfully. Teachers' professional learning as a team has brought about continuity and a consistency of learning and teaching approaches. These approaches are creative and encourage children to aim high. As a result, children love to read for pleasure and are motivated to improve their own writing.
- Children across the school are valued and cherished as individuals. They have an increasing understanding of their rights through their work to attain a Rights Respecting School award. They readily approach the headteacher with proposals for new clubs and activities to benefit their peers. They learn from his example of providing music, story and sport. Children use the work they do in class in identifying skills to write and present proposals for their ideas. Children have clearly defined leadership roles across the school. The pupil council, football captains, reading ambassadors, SHANARRI champions, house captains and junior young ambassadors groups meet regularly. They are becoming increasingly able to talk about their work through the lens of improving their school. They are ready to become even more involved in evaluating the work of their school alongside staff and the Parent Council. The pupil council recently worked closely with children from Eassie Primary School as part of their coming together days. They discussed their rights as children within the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) through World Book Day events.
- The Parent Council is active and contributes well to school improvement. It meets regularly and engages the headteacher in discussion about the progress of the priorities identified in the school improvement plan. The Parent Council also supports the school in its work with the local community and beyond.

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

very 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

- All teachers ensure there is a nurturing and positive ethos in classrooms. Relationships between adults and children, and between children, are extremely positive. Almost all children are eager to learn and engage very well in their learning. Children have great pride in their house point system and this contributes to high standards of positive behaviour and leadership opportunities throughout the school.
- Children and adults demonstrate genuine kindness and encouragement in their interactions with each other. This promotes a positive and inclusive learning environment. Almost all children are attentive and focused during class activities. Almost all are actively engaged in their learning and find it interesting. Children talk articulately about their learning and achievements. Children's contributions to the life of the school are valued and acted upon, resulting in meaningful and well-planned wider school activities.
- The headteacher and staff supported children very effectively to continue to learn during periods of school closure for COVID-19. Children and families responded very well to the creative tasks and home learning activities that teachers provided through an online programme.
- The quality of teaching across the school is very good. Overall, teachers provide learning activities which meet the needs of children very well in the multi-stage, composite classes. Senior leaders and teachers work closely together to ensure that children with barriers to learning are supported effectively.
- Teachers encourage children to relate skills for life, learning and work to their learning continuously. This helps them to make connections across the school day, providing greater understanding and interest. The school now has improved Wi-Fi connectivity and new digital devices. As a result, digital learning tasks are an embedded feature of day-to-day learning in all classes. Younger children can use programmable toys. Children at the upper stage are confident in using machine-scannable images to reach websites enabling them to complete their research efficiently.
- Teachers integrate children's play experiences with learning at the early stages well. This is helping to ensure a continuity of experience for children moving through from the setting. Teachers and children work together to provide engaging learning opportunities which children choose for themselves. Learning spaces are designed thoughtfully. Quality interactions and open-ended materials support children's curiosity. Literacy and numeracy skills are embedded in the activities to ensure children practise their skills. The youngest learners are becoming independent writers through activities such as writing their own stories. Teachers should continue to deepen their understanding of play pedagogy to help

them take forward their plans to progress play and problem-based learning across the school.

- Adults and children make particularly good use of the school grounds for learning, teaching and play. Children help design exciting spaces for fitness, den building and imaginative play. Where children want to continue their learning at breaktimes, teachers provide extension activities as a continuation of classroom learning.
- Adults model reading for enjoyment and it is embedded throughout the school. A love of reading is supporting children's wellbeing and enabling them to access the whole curriculum. Children have regular access to books from the school library and the visiting mobile library. They make the most of quiet times during the day to read. Children discuss authors and texts knowledgeably and enthusiastically. Reading ambassadors are working with a local tradesperson to design and convert an area of the school into a quieter reading space.
- Teachers ensure children have regular opportunities for personalisation and choice in their learning. For example, children help to plan their interdisciplinary topics, evaluating what they already know and deciding what they would like to find out about. Children can choose from 'The Daily Five' to develop skills in literacy. In doing so, they show responsibility, determination and effort in completing their tasks.
- Staff provide quality learning experiences for children using a range of different teaching approaches. These enable children to work in pairs and groups and they do this extremely well. Children speak highly of the trust staff have in them to work together. Staff should continue to ensure that all children are fully engaged when they are teaching the whole class or groups.
- Children receive useful verbal feedback from their teachers that is helping to ensure they have a clear understanding of their progress and next steps. Children give each other effective peer feedback that benefits their learning further. Teachers use summative assessments and regular classwork to generate precise data to measure children's progress across each academic year. They combine this with data from national assessments. This informs teachers' professional judgement and indicates children's progress against national standards clearly. Teachers work closely with colleagues from other schools to moderate their professional judgements ensuring a shared, reliable understanding of standards. Senior leaders use a quality assurance calendar incorporating reliable self-evaluation activities. This enables them to report accurately on the quality of learning and teaching and progress of children.
- Senior leaders and staff have robust systems in place to continuously check on the progress of all children. This includes those who are most affected by barriers to learning. They monitor children's progress as they move through the school and can reflect on each child's journey of learning in literacy and numeracy. Teachers participate in ongoing discussions with the headteacher about children's progress. They use assessment data effectively to plan targeted interventions to address individual children's needs. As a result, teachers ensure that children reach and sustain very high standards of attainment.
- Learning is shared with parents using an online system. Most parents commented very positively on the effectiveness of this system. Children may find it beneficial to set their own targets and chart their own progress through the levels using individual profiles.

2.2 Curriculum: Learning pathways

- The Glamis Primary School curriculum rationale is underpinned by the school values. All children experience their full curriculum entitlement. Through the work of the Tayside Regional Collaborative, teachers follow Dundee Council progressive pathways for all curricular areas. Teachers ensure that planned experiences build on children's prior learning and skills and support progression for all children. Teachers plan enjoyable and relevant learning experiences, ensuring that children have opportunities to make links in their learning to real-life contexts.
- Staff provide a curriculum that is relevant to the local community and the school context. For example, children work regularly with the Strathmore Estate, participating in educational workshops and competitions, accessing the grounds for outdoor learning and in the annual Highland Games.
- A full range of partnerships has now resumed following the end of COVID-19 mitigations. These ensure that children receive rich learning experiences across a range of curricular areas. Partners, including local businesses, reflect that the headteacher is very proactive in securing partnerships that impact positively on children's achievement.
- All children receive their full entitlement to two hours of high-quality physical education (PE) each week. Specialist PE coaches provide engaging opportunities for children to learn skills in rugby, football, and curling. Children access the local football pitch in Glamis regularly as part of their lunchtime activities. The Active Schools Coordinator works closely with the school, providing training and leadership opportunities for children and organising events for sporting achievement.
- All children learn French as a modern language from P1-7. In addition, they study Makaton which becomes part of the summer performance. The children are developing their understanding of the Scots language using the stimulus of poetry and their study of Robert Burns.
- Children from P3-P7 can learn a brass instrument and perform to a wider audience at end of term celebrations. A guitar club provides further musical opportunities for Primary 3 upwards. The children speak highly of drumming lessons provided by the headteacher.
- Children benefit from ever-increasing opportunities to explore the skills for learning, life and work. They use a skills progression framework very well and apply this knowledge to activities throughout the school day. Children are consulted on educational visits that broaden their learning. They talk knowledgeably about various careers from World of Work days.
- Staff have developed effective ways to support children as they move from the adjacent early years setting into P1. Children in P1 have settled well into school. Children moving to S1 are supported well to make successful transitions. Regular cooperative days take place with Eassie Primary School led by senior pupils who plan problem solving and sporting activities.

2.7 Partnerships: Impact on learners – parental engagement

- Parents are fully engaged in the work of the school. They are supportive of the many activities children are engaged in. In particular, parents share their skills readily to enhance learning or help children learn more about the world of work.
- The school benefits from 100% engagement of families on their relatively new electronic platform which shares learning and achievements. Parents speak highly of the regular examples of learning which they view from their own digital device. Most parents feel they receive enough information about how their children are progressing. The school and Parent Council should continue to work together to find the most effective ways to share information about children's progress.

2.1 Safeguarding

- 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. Areas for development have been agreed with the school and the education authority.

3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion

very good

This indicator focuses on the impact of the school's approach to wellbeing which underpins children and young people's ability to achieve success. It highlights the need for policies and practices to be well grounded in current legislation and a shared understanding of the value of every individual. A clear focus on ensuring wellbeing entitlements and protected characteristics supports all learners to maximise their successes and achievements. The themes are:

- wellbeing
- fulfilment of statutory duties
- inclusion and equality

- All adults in the school prioritise the mental, emotional and social wellbeing of children. Together, they have created an inclusive family environment. The positive, nurturing ethos of the school enables children to feel safe and do their best to reach the 'gold standards' the school has set. Almost all children feel confident in sharing when they are worried, unhappy or dissatisfied.
- Children are immensely proud of their school and appreciate the care and nurture of teachers and staff. They cooperate very well together in their learning and through the life of the school. Almost all children have a strong sense of wellbeing. They are resilient and demonstrate a positive mindset. They show high levels of respect and kindness toward each other. Children thrive on the level of trust adults place in them. This enables them to work effectively in small groups or pairs in learning spaces throughout the school.
- Senior leaders and teachers provide an appropriate health and wellbeing curriculum which reflects the school community and its many rich resources. They are careful to ensure children also learn about life beyond the school and are prepared well for important transitions as they move through the primary stages. The school has a sound rationale for the ways in which it teaches and helps children learn about wellbeing and their rights. As a result, children talk about and demonstrate an informed understanding of wellbeing, equality and inclusion. The pupil-led SHANARRI group promotes key wellbeing indicators each month. Members work well with classes, through meaningful activity, to help their peers understand what the indicators mean. They select children who demonstrate the characteristics of each indicator for an award. As planned, the groups should focus on and explore food and health. At assembly, 'Aim High' awards recognise and praise children for demonstrating their school values. Children show high levels of thoughtfulness for others and kindness and leadership during their learning activities. In the playground, children are inclusive and enthusiastic in their play. They try their best to resolve any differences responsibly using the high standards they have set.
- Physical health is important to children. They provide and join the many active lunchtime clubs including football and dance. Children have a very positive attitude towards competition. This gives them confidence as they represent their school in sporting activities.
- The headteacher leads by example in ensuring high levels of wellbeing are promoted and sustained across the school. He illustrates this skilfully through bespoke stories to help children understand wellbeing. Staff build on wellbeing in the classrooms effectively through teaching children about feelings, emotions and relationships. Adults readily praise and reward children for their efforts and successes. In class, children recognise each other's hard work, positive mindset and achievements. Senior leaders check on children's wellbeing regularly through the school's self-evaluation activities. They take action where children need additional support or

guidance. Communication amongst adults in school is highly effective and they liaise with parents timeously where necessary.

- The school is attentive to its legislative responsibilities about safeguarding. Child protection policies are reviewed annually and training is provided for anyone new joining the team. The headteacher takes responsibility for and ensures all staff have confidence in their understanding of the breadth of safeguarding and child protection. As required, senior leaders work closely with and learn from outside agencies such as social work and Police Scotland to safeguard children.
- Senior leaders and staff are proactive in providing additional support for children who need it. They work in close partnership with families, liaising and planning how best to provide any support or interventions children need. All children who receive extra support in their learning are making very good progress. Where required, the school works with outside professionals to enhance their expertise. Senior leaders support teachers very well in preparing individualised plans to help children make progress in areas of learning or wellbeing they find challenging. They should continue to refine these plans to ensure targets for learning are achievable and accessible to children.
- Getting It Right for Every Child is embedded in the school. Staff understand their responsibilities in relation to protected characteristics to ensure the school is inclusive and upholds children's rights. As appropriate to age and stage, staff plan learning about diversity and multi-faith issues. Curricular programmes in relationships, sexual health and parenthood and religious and moral education support this work well.
- Cooperative days with Eassie Primary School celebrated an education around the world day where children deepened their understanding about how children access education in other countries.

3.2 Raising attainment and achievement

very good

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

Attainment in literacy and numeracy

- There are very high levels of attainment across the school. The school's data shows that all children at early, first and second levels achieved national levels attainment in literacy and English, numeracy and mathematics for session 2021-2022. A few children exceeded these levels. Children who require additional support with their learning make very good progress. There are small numbers of children at each stage.
- This session, all children who are working towards early level are confident in literacy and numeracy building on from their experiences in the setting. Children's progress and attainment towards first and second levels is very good. A few children are working beyond national expectations for their stage. Inspection activity agrees with the data supplied by the school. This indicates that children's levels of progress and attainment are meeting national standards and being exceeded for a few. Children who require additional support with their learning are making strong progress. Senior leaders and teachers keep a close check on children's progress as individuals and as a year group. They intervene when children need extra support or adaptations to teaching to reach their targets. As a result, children's attainment is of a very high standard.

Attainment in literacy and English

- Almost all children are on track to achieve or exceed expected levels of attainment in listening and talking, reading and writing.

Listening and Talking

- Almost all children are making very good progress in listening and talking. At the early level, most children listen well to everyday instructions and prompts. Almost all children who have attained early level listen respectfully and respond positively to instructions. Almost all children at first level take turns appropriately during different models of class discussion and can share their learning. At second level, almost all children confidently articulate their learning and can describe the ways in which their skills can be applied to life and work. Through the life of the school, all children readily and confidently listen and talk for a wide range of purposes. Almost all interact socially with their peers respectfully.

Reading

- Children demonstrate an enthusiasm for reading at all stages. Almost all are making very good progress in sharing their favourite books and authors and give reasons for their choices. They do this very well. Reading for enjoyment is promoted at every stage by teachers and the reading ambassadors. Children are encouraged to take books home and this has extended their reading opportunities. At the early level, all children are gaining the confidence to read by learning letters and how to blend them. Children working towards first level read regularly with their teachers and use their knowledge of sounds to read unfamiliar

words. As they progress, they are becoming more able to use expression and comment very well on an author's use of text. At second level, all children read a wide range of genres to broaden their experience. They are becoming increasingly able to identify with their preferred author's style. Children read widely to enhance their knowledge and understanding through, for example, understanding and comparing land use in their local area. They do this effectively.

Writing

- Across the school, all children's skills in writing are benefitting from their enthusiasm for reading and listening to stories. Children speak proudly of the progress they have made as they progress through the school. Alongside their teachers, they have displayed very strong progression in writing from P1 to P7 to enable all children to aim high. Children at early level are learning to write letters and words. All children working towards first level show a positive attitude toward having a go at communicating their ideas. As they progress, their writing is becoming more fluent, incorporating rich vocabulary and imagery. At second level, all children write for a range of purposes. Instructions, poetry, persuasive and imaginative writing demonstrate children's high standards and continuous positive progress. At all stages, children use their learning about the tools for good writing, such as grammar and punctuation, to improve their work. Teachers should continue to develop the standard of handwriting and presentation of children's written work.

Numeracy and mathematics

- Almost all children are on track to achieve or for a few, exceed expected national levels of attainment in numeracy and mathematics. Children sustain high levels of attainment as they move through the school.

Number, money and measure

- At all stages, children demonstrate an enthusiasm and confidence in working with number. All children working at early level are learning number bonds. Those who have achieved early level can confidently identify coins to £2 and can apply addition and subtraction skills to coinage within 20 pence. Children at first level can use number processes to work independently and with peers in calculating four step number problems with three-digit whole numbers. At second level, all children estimate and measure capacity in millilitres and litres, then record and analyse results on a bar graph accurately.

Shape, position and movement

- All children working at the early level can identify two-dimensional shapes and use them to create patterns. Those who are working towards first level can provide clear directional instructions when having fun with programmable toys. At first and second levels, children are confident at working with two-dimensional shapes and three-dimensional objects and their properties. At all stages, all children are deepening their understanding through meaningful learning and practical application. Outdoors, children explore and experiment with mathematical and scientific concepts through loose parts play, including finding out about angles and kinetic energy.

Information handling

- Across the school, children collect and use data for a range of meaningful purposes. They work with the headteacher to collect and use data about their wellbeing. By second level, all children work in small groups to present their findings from scientific investigations on a graph. This incorporates estimation, rounding numbers and measurement.

Attainment over time

- The school has small numbers of children at each stage and these numbers fluctuate each school year. The school can demonstrate very high levels of attainment over time. Senior leaders are rigorous in ensuring children make continuous progress through the school. This served the school well during periods of closure due to COVID-19. When children returned to school, attainment recovered quickly. The headteacher deploys staff thoughtfully to support children at any stage who may need extra help to meet their targets. PEF is used to provide additional staffing capacity to ensure children receive the interventions they need and accelerate their progress.
- At all stages, children are making very strong progress across other areas of the curriculum. Children sing and make music. They are developing a wide range of skills through PE. This helps them to participate well in team sports and create dance sequences. Children use loose parts at all stages to create structures and explore scientific concepts.

Overall quality of learner's achievements

- Children enjoy a wide range of opportunities to achieve high levels of success within school. These opportunities are planned by children alongside their teachers. They use their individual talents to build a strong sense of mental, social and physical wellbeing. Older children organise and manage lunchtime clubs successfully. These provide opportunities in sport, music, and drama for all children. Staff plan engaging opportunities with children to contribute to the life and ethos of the school in their community, for example, the community café. Children who have achieved as an individual or as a team outside school share their success with the school community. Children recently shared their sporting and leadership achievements in the Curling Cool Programme.
- Senior leaders check that all children achieve meaningful and genuine success as they progress through the school. Children, alongside their teachers track the skills they achieve and relate them to their understanding of skills for learning, life and work. Children and staff celebrate success daily and at weekly assemblies. These include the highlights of the children's week which reflect the hard work, determination and effort children have put into their learning.

Equity for all learners

- Staff and the Parent Council have a clear understanding of hidden poverty and the cost of living crisis. They are mindful of the cost of the school day. They take steps, including the use of PEF, to ensure equity of opportunity for all children. Staff and children offer a wide range of clubs at lunchtimes through the school year as children are not able to access late school transport for after school clubs.
- The wider school community is generous in sharing resources to benefit all children. The Parent Council support fundraising and any projects children plan.

Practice worth sharing more widely

The values of the school contribute significantly to their high levels of attainment. These are embedded in all learning and teaching and through the life of the school. They motivate children to be resilient and work hard. The 'Aim High' motto is simple but effective. It is underpinned by the 'Glamis Gold Standards' which are recognised by the school community. These standards help children to work hard and treat each other with kindness and respect. Skills for learning, life and work are a key driver within the Glamis curriculum. This brings meaning, purpose and relevance to children's learning. Combined with the values of the school, this brings about a joyous and purposeful ethos where all children are successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors.

The school achieves consistent, very high attainment. The work of senior leaders to track and monitor children's progress means that they intervene effectively to accelerate progress. The headteacher and principal teacher teach regularly. They do 'walkabouts' and classroom observations. They know each child in depth. This enables them to work closely with teachers to ensure the learning and teaching approaches are at the right pace and level of challenge. During the inspection, senior leaders intervened when children needed extra support.

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.