

Summarised inspection findings

Lasswade Primary School

Midlothian Council

27 February 2024

Key contextual information

Lasswade Primary School and Early Learning and Childcare Setting is a non-denominational school located in Bonnyrigg, Midlothian. The school is within the Lasswade High School catchment area. At the time of the inspection, the senior leadership team was made up of a headteacher, one deputy headteacher and one acting deputy headteacher.

The school roll is 335 pupils. Children are educated across 14 classes. The early learning and childcare setting provides early learning and childcare for up to 64 children from age three. The majority of children live within Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) deciles 6 to 10. A minority of children live in SIMD deciles 3 to 5. The school has a low percentage of children eligible for free meal entitlement. When compared to national averages, the school has a low percentage of children with additional support needs.

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

- The highly respected headteacher provides effective leadership across the school. The headteacher is supported well by deputy headteachers. Members of the school community value the work senior leaders undertake in developing a happy and respectful environment that focuses on improving outcomes for children. Senior leaders' work is underpinned by the school's vision, values and aims. The school strapline 'Living it, Learning it, Loving it' is used by staff across the school to develop a sense of pride in the school community. Children speak positively about how staff help them enjoy school life and learning. Children, their families and staff continue to promote a school culture that reflects the vision, values and aims well. Senior leaders continue to review and refresh vision, values and aims with children and the wider school community. This ensures that the vision, values and aims remain relevant and continue to be shaped by children and the school community.
- Senior leaders and staff worked effectively with children who designed 'Lasswade's Learning Superheroes'. Children ensured that their learning superheroes connected to the school's vision, values and aims very well. Children across the school understand how the learning superheroes help them to be successful, confident, responsible and contribute effectively. Children continue to have ownership of the learning superheroes, with one new superhero created recently. As a result, children influence and support other children's learning.
- Staff support children in the later stages of the school to participate in leadership roles well. These children value their opportunities to lead aspects of the work of the school. Children take on roles such as house captains, sports leaders and Junior Road Safety Officers (JRSO). Children who are involved in digital learning groups benefit from a partnership with a local university. They are planning to share their learning with peers in a neighbouring school. Senior leaders and staff should now extend the leadership opportunities offered to all children,

including younger children. Staff should also help children to see the link between these roles and the development of skills for learning, life and work.

- Senior leaders create a very supportive environment for staff to develop, lead and initiate change across the school. They work effectively with staff to design appropriate collegiate activities across the school year. As a result, a significant number of staff lead a range of important strategic or operational activities successfully within and beyond the school. Senior leaders ensure that all staff maintain a focus on the needs of learners and school improvement priorities through the collegiate activities. Activities link well to raising attainment in literacy and numeracy and improving equity for children. Senior leaders have returned to undertaking most planned quality assurance activities following the pandemic. They should, as planned, ensure all quality assurance activities are undertaken, including the sampling of classwork. This will support them design future collegiate activities, using evidence from quality assurance.
- Senior leaders ensure almost all staff engage in relevant and purposeful career long professional learning (CLPL) that links appropriately with their professional development. For example, senior leaders supported a few staff effectively to undertake Masters level and Ph.D qualifications. Senior leaders ensure all staff have time to reflect on their CLPL, how this can be applied to classroom practice and the work of the school. As a result, staff are enthusiastic and ensure that they contribute meaningfully to school improvement, self-evaluation and whole school professional learning events. This approach is beginning to lead to improvements for children across the school.
- Senior leaders and staff ensure the pace of change is well-managed. Senior leaders recently supported staff to learn about the benefits of professional enquiry for literacy and numeracy. They have now worked to develop staffs' understanding of the purpose of professional enquiry. This includes introducing how staff can plan and prepare effectively for a meaningful professional enquiry. Although at the early stages of development, a minority of staff are developing a practitioner enquiry approach within their practice. Senior leaders should continue with their plans to support all staff to embed this approach more fully across the school.
- The headteacher is highly effective in developing effective partnerships in and beyond the school, including opportunities for children to lead initiatives. This is leading to senior leaders and staff having a strong commitment to work with the wider community, inclusive of other schools across the local authority. The headteacher is considered by peers to be an influential leader within the associated schools group (ASG). She works well with other ASG school leaders to develop effective practice, for example, in identifying and supporting children to make smooth transitions to secondary school. The headteacher should continue with her plans to develop effective practice across Lasswade Primary School and then share this with other schools in the ASG.
- Senior leaders share with the Parent Council and staff how they intend to use Pupil Equity Funding (PEF), and the planned outcomes for groups of children. Parents and staff trust the judgement of senior leaders in how PEF will be used. Senior leaders should now develop approaches so that staff, children and their families are more involved in decision making and evaluating the impact of PEF.

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

- Staff work together effectively to provide an environment where every child is valued as an individual. They are a highly committed team. All children and adults are friendly, polite, and welcoming. They create a climate of mutual respect which ensures that interactions both in and outwith the classroom are supportive. All staff ensure their interactions underpin the positive, nurturing, and caring ethos evident throughout the school. Staff embed 'Lasswade's Learning Superheroes' effectively in the majority of lessons and refer to them regularly. As a result, almost all children engage well during direct teaching and stay on task in learning activities. Almost all children work well with others to complete tasks.
- Most staff work effectively to ensure personalisation and choice is evident in learning across the school. They promote this well through their 'personalisation and choice' (PAC) approaches. Most children are motivated by this approach and enjoy their learning activities. However, learning can be overly teacher led in a minority of activities. Children have significant capacity to take a greater lead in their learning. Teachers should continue as planned to develop further their approaches to increase experiences for children to develop independence in learning. These would enable greater opportunities for children to be more active participants in their learning.
- Almost all teachers enhance children's experiences by incorporating digital technology into learning and teaching effectively. They use interactive whiteboards well to enhance learning through the presentation of information. All children access activities through their personal digital devices. Teachers enrich children's learning through the use of digital devices. For example, when encouraging children to research information, access online tasks and submit work. Children are aware of the real-life application of technologies through their learning, such as when using programmable devices and coding. This is developing their skills for learning, life and work. Staff are taking important steps to develop digital skills for children and themselves. They have been successful in being awarded grants which have enabled them to increase the provision of hardware. This is impacting positively on learning experiences.
- Most teachers set learning at the right level for most children through groupings and texts provided. This is predominantly evident in their planning of literacy and numeracy activities. Teachers' use of whole class learning results in activities being too easy for a few children. As planned, teachers should continue to develop their approaches to ensure challenge is provided using appropriate differentiated approaches. This includes developing approaches to ensure that higher-achieving learners' progress is accelerated further.
- Almost all teachers provide clear explanations and instructions. Most teachers ensure they share links to prior learning with children. Almost all children respond confidently when questioned to check for understanding. Teachers should continue to develop this approach to

ensure children are aware of their next steps. This will enable them to have greater self-awareness of progression in their learning.

- Teachers share the purpose of learning at the start of most lessons. A minority of children articulate well what they need to do to be successful in their learning. Teachers should work with children to increase their involvement in co-constructing what success will look like. This will help all children have greater clarity about what they are aiming to achieve. In a few classes, teachers use feedback very effectively to inform children of their next steps in learning. Children are familiar with areas they are doing well in or areas they could improve on as a self- and peer-evaluation strategy. Teachers should now develop further the consistency of their feedback to children across all classes. This will help all children to understand how to improve and make greater progress in their learning better.
- Staff at the early stages are beginning to incorporate appropriate play experiences, including outdoor play into children's daily learning. They are responsive to children's interests and encourage them to contribute to the selection of resources and activities. Staff should continue to engage with evidence-based research, including national guidance, and review their use of space, resources and prompts. They need to ensure that children are supported more effectively through their interactions with adults and are provided with sufficient challenge. This will help children to progress their learning and develop and extend their knowledge and skills during play.
- Teachers work collaboratively to plan how they will assess children's learning at key points in the school year. They use a range of formative, summative and standardised assessment approaches in health and wellbeing, literacy and numeracy well. Teachers continue to work together effectively to ensure assessment is integral to their planning across the stages and Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) levels. They make effective use of national standards and their own school assessment approaches. Senior leaders work closely with staff to analyse information gathered from assessment activity to target additional support for children. This ensures children receive the extra help they need to address any gaps in learning. Senior leaders and staff now need to demonstrate more clearly the impact of all interventions in raising attainment and closing the poverty related attainment gap.
- Senior leaders and teachers make effective use of video evidence of children's learning experiences to engage in professional learning about moderation. Teachers, as part of their ASG, take part in rigorous moderation of literacy and numeracy. This supports clear action plans for teachers to ensure they meet children's learning needs more effectively. It is also continuing to build teachers' confidence as they make professional judgements of children's progress through CfE.
- Almost all teachers plan learning experiences with flexibility and children's interests in mind. Teachers work closely together to ensure children at each stage have consistent and equitable learning experiences in all areas of the curriculum. Teachers are beginning to use their professional enquiry approach to build continuously on the quality and range of experiences they provide.
- Senior leaders have clear processes in place to keep a close check on children's progress. They meet regularly with teachers through rigorous progress and attainment meetings at key points in the school year. In these meetings they collaborate and set key actions to improve outcomes for children. As a result, teachers are deepening their understanding of how their teaching impacts on children's progress. Teachers are becoming more experienced in using assessment information to understand children's progress and achievements and the extent to which they deliver equity for all children. Senior leaders recognise it is timely to broaden their current processes to include all areas of the curriculum.

2.2 Curriculum: Learning pathways

- Teachers use recently introduced local authority learning progression planners well to plan programmes of study for all children across all curricular areas. They use these planners to help them assess children's progress using experiences and outcomes and refer to national benchmarks. They consider how well children build on their prior learning and make appropriate progress with learning. Teachers have begun to assess children's progress in other areas of the curriculum. They plan a high-quality assessment task each term together, to assess how well children transfer their skills in literacy and numeracy across other areas of the curriculum.
- Teachers ensure that children develop skills in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing across the curriculum using interdisciplinary learning experiences. This is helping children draw on prior knowledge and transfer and apply their skills across other areas of learning. For example, children use their literacy skills to research relevant information and organise this before applying it to design activities.
- Senior leaders have correctly identified outdoor learning opportunities as an area for improvement. Currently, the main use of outdoors is for physical education. Staff should be proactive in promoting the benefits of being outdoors in the classroom, the playground and the wider school community. In doing so, they can encourage and capitalise on the potential of the outdoor context to provide new challenges and ways of learning.
- Teachers support most children develop digital literacy across a range of contexts. As a result, learners are growing in confidence in how to use technology and engage in learning through managing information, communicating and collaborating, problem-solving and being creative, and the appropriate and responsible use of technology. Children develop their understanding of issues related to the digital world well through the school's digital learning programme. For example, children understanding the media and their own personal digital footprint. This is supporting children to develop their understanding of how to navigate the digital world so that it impacts positively on their wellbeing.
- All children receive their statutory entitlement to planned, progressive physical education each week. Teachers deliver quality physical education lessons within the school, in school grounds or at the nearby secondary school. Senior leaders should work with teachers to review the timings of physical education, particularly for younger children. This will ensure they take part in activities across the school week. There is a need for senior leaders to work with staff to review where physical education can take place when weather restricts the possibility of using the outdoors. This will ensure that all children have continuity in their physical education learning experiences.

2.7 Partnerships: Impact on learners – parental engagement

- All staff establish very positive relationships with children's parents and families. Parents say that staff are very approachable. They feel comfortable sharing any concerns or worries they may have regarding their child's progress at the school. This helps them to know that staff work in their child's best interests and want them to achieve as best they can. Parents attend meetings across the year that shares the progress their child is making. Parents find this helpful when understanding the progress their child is making at school. Overall, parents feel this helps them understand any gaps their child has in learning.
- Parents that attended the school's digital learning opportunity valued the information on how digital tools support their child. The school should continue to work with parents to grow parental engagement in initiatives like the digital learning opportunity. This will help parents increase their support in their child's learning outwith school.
- The school's Parent Council supports the school well through providing resources or organising events for children to attend outwith the school day. The Parent Council gathers parents views on matters of importance to them. Staff recognise the importance of continuing to promote the Parent Council to ensure this remains well attended and continues to support the school.

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

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 staff develop and maintain caring, supportive relationships with all children. They know and understand the importance of developing children's wellbeing. Staff use a whole school approach, which supports their well developed understanding of wellbeing and how this impacts on children's attainment. Staff know each child's individual needs well. Almost all staff treat children with high levels of dignity and respect. This supports children to learn in a school where they know staff care for them and want them to achieve as best they can. Children know they have adults in the school whom they can trust to share personal details or concerns they may have.
- Staff use the wellbeing indicators effectively and these are integral to the work of the school. They feature in posters throughout the school and are discussed in lessons and at assemblies. This supports children's understanding of wellbeing effectively. Children can talk clearly about each of the wellbeing indicators and their importance to their development. Children are learning about their rights, as laid out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Teachers discuss these in classes and whole school assemblies. Teachers should now develop further how they support children to have a deeper and more meaningful understanding of their rights, and what these mean to them in practice.
- Children complete a wellbeing questionnaire twice per year. This is a relatively new development and needs time to become more embedded in the work of the school. As this embeds, it will help senior leaders and staff use the information gathered to deepen their understanding of each individual child's emotional needs. Senior leaders should continue as planned to consider how the information gathered can be analysed, tracked and monitored more effectively. This has the potential to support them to evidence how well children's wellbeing is improving across the school. This includes helping senior leaders identify any potential gaps in children's wellbeing, which they will require to address.
- Following the pandemic, staff recognise a need to help children develop their resilience further. They have undertaken a number of initiatives, which build effectively on existing practice to improve children's wellbeing and resilience. Teachers support children to discuss, share and understand their feelings in lessons. Children show consideration for each other's feelings when playing with, or listening to, their peers. Teachers are helping children develop strategies they can use to self-regulate in any instances where they become upset. Children use these strategies well, when appropriate, to help them to re-engage in their learning. Teachers' use of restorative language and conversations is supporting most children to develop their understanding of how they can resolve any disagreements amicably.
- Senior leaders deploy a range of appropriate interventions for children with additional support. These include adaptations by class teachers or individual or group support from support staff. Senior leaders evidence that initial indications show that this additional support is helping

children to develop their social skills and increase their attainment in literacy and numeracy well. Senior leaders should consider how to evaluate the impact of all interventions more robustly to ensure they lead to improvements in outcomes for children.

- Senior leaders meet weekly to discuss children's wellbeing and progress across the school. This helps them to maintain an up-to-date overview of children's needs and any issues children may be experiencing. These meetings help senior leaders to maintain a constant focus on children's attendance. They take appropriate action to help increase children's attendance. The headteacher provides comprehensive and caring supports to children's families that helps parents send their child to school. As a result of senior leaders prioritising children's attendance, attendance at the school has increased from 90% to 94% over the last three years. This is 1% below pre-pandemic levels.
- Senior leaders understand and comply with statutory requirements and local authority staged intervention processes very well. They know when it is appropriate to seek assistance or support from partner agencies. Partners speak highly of the headteacher and depute headteachers' abilities in identifying children who require support beyond that normally available from within the school. This close focus on prioritising children's needs ensures that children receive the support they need when they need it.
- Children's individualised targets are captured well in individualised education programmes (IEPs). Targets are most commonly linked to appropriate literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. Staff share these targets with children's parents. Senior leaders should consider how children and their parents could be involved more fully in developing children's individual IEP targets. This should include exploring how targets might impact more widely on children's outcomes beyond the school.
- Children are developing their understanding of issues related to diversity and equality well through class lessons and whole school assemblies. This is helping children to develop their understanding of people with different backgrounds, faiths and beliefs.

3.2 Raising attainment and achievement

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

- In June 2023, most children at first and second level, and the majority at early level, achieved expected levels of attainment in reading. Almost all children at first and second level, and most at early level, achieved expected levels of attainment in listening and talking. Most children achieved expected levels of attainment in writing and numeracy.
- Most children who require additional support in literacy and numeracy are making good progress towards their individual targets. A minority of children requiring additional support would benefit from being given work at a level which better meets their needs. This includes, for a few, providing increased challenge.

Attainment in literacy and English

- Across the school, most children are making good progress in all aspects of literacy. A few children are making very good progress in reading and talking and listening. A few children at early and first level, and a minority at second level, are making very good progress and exceeding national expectations for writing.

Listening and talking

- Most children express their ideas and opinions confidently and ask appropriate questions to seek more information or clarify instructions. Children can identify the skills they need to listen and talk effectively through their learning across the curriculum. A few children show high levels of skill in interacting with each other. Most children need to continue to build their vocabulary to help them express and explain their ideas to others.

Reading

- Across the school children enjoy reading for pleasure. Most children can express their preference for books and authors and give reasons for their choice. They use library areas well within classrooms and shared spaces to select texts of interest.
- Most children across the school read confidently and apply strategies to help them, appropriate to their stage. At early level, a few children need to continue to learn initial sounds and blends to help them read more fluently. As children progress through the school, they demonstrate a clear understanding of the wide range of texts including digital texts available to them to enrich their learning. Most children read aloud with increasing fluency and expression. They can discuss the main ideas, characters, plot and events in the texts they read. A few children need to continue to learn and apply strategies to help them read words they are unsure of. In doing so, staff should support them to build fluency and confidence in reading texts and applying their reading skills in their writing.

Writing

- Most children write sentences confidently with appropriate punctuation and use their knowledge of sounds to spell words well. They understand the advantages of planning their writing to help organise their ideas. As they move through the school, children create texts to express their imagination, views and convey information they have researched. Children who have achieved early level are proud of their writing skills. They should continue to practise letter formation. A few at first level, need to continue to practise expressing their ideas and the accuracy of spelling common words. A few children at second level need to continue to build their confidence in applying their learning to create a range of texts.

Attainment in numeracy and mathematics

- Across the school, most children are making good progress in numeracy and mathematics. A few children at early and first level, and a minority at second level, are making very good progress and exceeding national expectations.
- Children at all levels are confident to use a range of support materials and different strategies to solve problems and complete calculations. They demonstrate a keen interest in numeracy and mathematics and are increasingly able to articulate how they arrive at their answers. Most children need to improve the presentation of their numeracy work.

Number, money and measurement

- At early level, children recognise odd and even numbers and can complete addition and subtraction calculations. They need support to identify common coins, calculate change from 20p and to develop their ability to read analogue clock times. Children who have achieved first level can complete problems involving the four basic operations. They can order, compare and simplify common fractions. At first level, most children need to develop quicker recall of multiplication and division facts. Almost all need to improve their understanding of common units of length. Children who have achieved second level can simplify and express fractions as percentages but need more experience of converting and comparing fractions.

Shape, position and movement

- Children who have achieved early level use the language of position and direction accurately and can identify common three-dimensional objects. They need support to create patterns using shapes. Children who have achieved first level can draw a shape with two lines of symmetry and use two-figure grid references. They know the properties of an appropriate range of three-dimensional objects and can use the correct terminology to describe them. They are less confident when working with angles. Children who have achieved second level can identify a range of angles and know all eight compass points. They need to develop their knowledge of nets.

Information handling

- Children who have achieved early level can use their knowledge of colour, shape, size and other properties to sort items in a variety of different ways. They need support to recognise and understand how they can find and use information in their own environment. Children who have achieved first level can interpret a bar chart and create questions for others based on information presented. They need to develop their understanding of appropriate scales. Children who have achieved second level can analyse information that is shown in a range of formats and ask and answer questions about the data. Most can explain how digital technology is used in real-life contexts, both in school and in the world of work, to gather and analyse data.

Attainment over time

- The school has maintained good levels of attainment over recent years, with a dip evident post-pandemic. Senior leaders track closely the attainment of individual children over time.

They have recently introduced an electronic tracking system which will make it easier to identify trends in the progress made by year on year by cohorts of children.

Overall quality of learner's achievements

- Staff celebrate and share children's individual and collective achievements effectively on displays throughout the school and on social media. Children feel proud that their successes are recognised and valued. The school has achieved accreditation for work undertaken by staff and children in promoting children's rights and supporting environmental issues. Children talk positively about these areas and understand how they relate to their own lives in school.
- Children have access to a wide range of lunchtime and after-school clubs which are led by staff, partners and parents. Staff track children's participation in these activities and are proactive in ensuring equity of opportunity. They should now support children to understand the range of skills that they are developing through their participation.

Equity for all learners

- Senior leaders closely analyse attainment information and identify the poverty-related attainment gap across the school. They have allocated a proportion of PEF to provide additional teaching time for children who require support in literacy and numeracy. Staff can evidence that targeted interventions are helping to close the gap in literacy, particularly in writing. The majority of children who are negatively impacted by their socio-economic circumstances are currently on track to achieve expected levels of attainment. A few are exceeding national expectations. Senior leaders are aware of the impact of the cost of living crisis and have taken steps to reduce the cost of the school day. They take a proactive and sensitive approach to signposting sources of financial support for families who may require assistance.

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.