

# Summarised inspection findings

**Broomhill Primary School**

Aberdeen City Council

7 March 2023

## Key contextual information

Broomhill Primary School and Nursery Class is a non-denominational school situated within the Harlaw Academy catchment area. The school is a traditional Victorian building. There are 447 pupils on the primary school roll organised into 16 classes. Last session, the school welcomed over 50 new pupils to the school. There are 85 children on the nursery roll. The senior leadership team comprises of a headteacher and two depute headteachers.

Overall, COVID-19 has had a significant impact on the school with an increase in staff and children's absences.

The school has a very small number of children living in Scottish Areas of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) data zones one and two.

### 1.3 Leadership of change

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

- A few years ago, senior leaders and staff consulted with stakeholders to create a shared vision, values and aims. Staff help to embed these fully and meaningfully as part of school assemblies, rewards and class discussions, and via social media. As a result, children and stakeholders are very familiar with the school's vision and values. Children and staff also created their own song incorporating their vision and values, which details how 'to make Broomhill brilliant'. Staff continued to use the school's vision and values to support children's wellbeing and continuity of learning throughout the pandemic. Senior leaders plan to work with stakeholders to refresh the school vision and values to ensure they are still relevant.
- Across the school, there is a welcoming and positive ethos. Staff have fostered very positive relationships with children. During the pandemic, senior leaders identified the need to focus on the wellbeing of both children and staff. Senior leaders and staff identified a specific need for children to re-establish positive relationships with their peers. This was particularly necessary due to the small circle of peers children had been engaging with as a result of COVID-19 restrictions. Almost all teaching and support staff have undertaken professional learning to raise awareness of trauma-informed practice. This has resulted in children benefitting from a calmer and more inclusive climate for learning. Staff report that, overall, children enjoy more positive relationships with their peers. In addition, staff are implementing their newly developed positive relationships policy. It will be important that senior leaders and staff support children and parents to understand how they apply this in practice.
- Staff have a good understanding of the social, economic and cultural context of the school. Across the school, staff demonstrate care and compassion for their learners and families. Over the last year, they have welcomed and continue to welcome a significant number of new families including a high number from overseas. They have taken positive steps to enable children and their families to feel included and supported. Staff along with support for learning

staff, take prompt action to identify when new pupils require additional support with their learning.

- Since the headteacher joined the school, she has helped to drive forward school improvement. She sets a positive tone and, along with the staff, has helped to create an inclusive climate for learning. Staff and most parents report that they appreciate the positive and significant changes that have taken place since the headteacher has taken up post. She has worked well with staff to increase their involvement in school improvement. She demonstrates great resilience and strives to do her best for children and their families. Along with the two deputy headteachers, she promotes a collaborative approach to school improvement. As a result, almost all staff believe they are supporting positive change in the school. Staff report they feel well supported by senior leaders and benefit from strong teamwork with their colleagues. Senior leaders create positive conditions which encourage staff leadership. This is resulting in an increasing role for staff in school improvement. All staff lead a pupil participation group, and a few staff are leading aspects of curriculum development. Senior leaders should continue to encourage staff to influence and shape school improvement. This will enable those areas still requiring improvement to move forward at a brisker pace and promote greater collective responsibility.
- Senior leaders have established a quality assurance calendar to coordinate the range of approaches for evaluating the work of the school. They undertake regular meetings with staff to review children's progress and discuss the impact of targeted and universal interventions. They consult with staff to evaluate school improvement activities. They also consult with children and parents regularly as part of their approaches to self evaluation. For example, most recently, senior leaders sought children's views in relation to the school's new approaches to interdisciplinary learning. As planned, senior leaders should re-establish regular classroom observations to support greater consistency in learning and teaching.
- Staff are keen to engage in professional learning to improve their practice. They readily engage with professional research and practitioner enquiry activities. All teaching staff undertook professional learning to make learning more visible to their learners. This is now evident in most classes across the school. Recently, the majority of teaching and support staff engaged in a shared professional reading exercise to develop their practice to promote positive relationships. They used their own professional development time to support this work.
- Staff are including children more in making decisions about school improvement. Children take on roles such as house captains and digital leaders. There is scope to build on this. Staff are re-establishing pupil participation groups following restrictions related to the pandemic. Helpfully, all pupils in the school participate in one of the groups. Children share the work of the groups on 'Broomhill Buzzsite' with each other and parents. They have recently been asked their views about some of the new approaches to learning and teaching. Staff are using their responses to inform future developments.
- Most parents who responded to questionnaires express confidence in the leadership and management of the school. Overall, they find senior leaders and staff approachable and that they respond well to concerns. A few parents would appreciate more regular feedback about any concerns they raise.
- This session senior leaders identified a need to improve learning and teaching to ensure greater consistency across the school. This work is still on going. It will be necessary for senior leaders to work with staff to continue to develop a shared understanding of what high quality learning and teaching looks like. Staff have taken positive steps to develop new approaches to interdisciplinary learning. As a result, children have greater opportunities for personalisation and choice in their learning.

- Senior leaders make use of Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) to resource some targeted support for children to help address the poverty-related attainment gap. In addition, they have used funding to provide a number of universal supports. The headteacher and senior leaders should continue to review how funding is allocated and measure the subsequent impact on identified learners.

## 2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

satisfactory

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 collegiately to nurture positive and supportive relationships reflecting the school's values and the developing understanding of children's rights. The school's values are displayed throughout the school. Staff also make use of the wellbeing indicators and class recognition boards, to support improvements within health and wellbeing. Most children behave well and are keen to learn. They appreciate the emotional check-ins at the beginning of the day. Children are attentive in class and listen well to instructions. They are motivated and participate enthusiastically in their learning when tasks and activities are matched well to their needs and interests.
- Most staff prepare and organise suitable resources to support the majority of children's experiences. Senior leaders and teachers should review approaches to classroom organisation and the management of teaching time to support better the needs of learners in a few classes. This includes the effective deployment of support staff and approaches to differentiation. Staff need to ensure that all children experience high-quality and appropriately challenging learning activities. Senior leaders and teachers have made a start in establishing a shared understanding of high-quality learning and teaching. This is at the early stages of implementation. As planned, senior leaders now need to work with staff to implement a consistent approach across all stages to build on the good practice within the school.
- Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory with a few examples of good practice. Staff should continue to work together to share good practice and improve approaches to learning and teaching. Most classroom learning environments are calm and purposeful. Teachers are at the early stages of using a range of learning environments such as the outdoors and local community spaces to enhance learning and teaching. Staff should maximise the school's proximity to the local community to enhance learning opportunities for all children.
- As planned, senior leaders and staff should review the learning environments across the early level. This would ensure opportunities for children in P1 to learn through well planned, purposeful play. Staff now need to develop further their understanding of child development theories and pedagogy through available research in, for example, *Realising the Ambition: Being Me*. In doing this, they should focus on how they use the learning space well to create a meaningful and motivating play experience for all children.
- The majority of teachers provide clear instructions and helpful explanations. In most lessons, teachers share with children the purpose of their learning and how to be successful. In a few lessons children are beginning to co create learning intentions. There is a need for staff to encourage children to help identify how they can demonstrate success in their learning. This will support children to articulate clearly their strengths and next steps in learning. Staff should increasingly discuss with children the skills they are developing and how these relate to real life contexts, including the world of work.

- Staff should work on developing a range of higher-order questions to support their teaching approaches. They should improve the use of displays to provide examples of high-quality work and share expected standards with children. This would support children to become more independent in their learning.
- Staff have initiated positive changes to the teaching of writing across the school. They have created helpful guides and introduced improved resources. This has been successful in motivating children to write and encouraging older children to create short and extended texts for different purposes. Staff should now work together to develop a fuller understanding of good practice in the teaching of writing skills. This would help ensure a more consistent approach across the school.
- Despite ongoing challenges with connectivity in school, the majority of staff make good use of digital technologies to support children's learning experiences. Children and staff have undertaken improvement activities to share skills and ideas through the digital learners' pupil voice group. Children access assistive technologies, extend their research skills, consolidate learning and explore website building and coding. Children and staff make consistent use of an online platform to facilitate the sharing of learning between school and home. Senior leaders should continue to liaise with local authority colleagues to prioritise connectivity upgrades.
- Staff use a range of summative assessments including weekly spelling and mathematics tests. They now need to act on this assessment evidence to differentiate learning more effectively and plan interventions for children needing support in their learning. This should ensure all children, including those that require additional challenge, make appropriate progress through the Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) levels. The school should progress with their plans to develop individual learning profiles.
- Teachers provide helpful oral feedback to children on their effort and engagement with learning tasks. Most teachers make regular checks for understanding. They should provide written feedback that focuses on strengths and outlines what children need to do to improve. Teachers support and provide opportunities for self and peer assessment, which is particularly successful in writing lessons at the upper stages.
- Prior to the pandemic, staff worked well within neighbouring schools to moderate children's progress. Last session, staff engaged in virtual moderation activities with colleagues. Senior leaders plan to increase moderation opportunities for staff to work with each other, and other schools. This will enable teachers to learn with and from each other, strengthening the validity and reliability of teachers' professional judgements across the school.
- Staff routinely utilise commercial resources to plan learning and teaching. They would benefit from reviewing their progression pathways. This is to provide a more streamlined, consistent approach to the planning and delivery of learning, teaching and assessment. This would support them to ensure progression in learning through the CfE levels.
- Staff track children's progress on the school's digital tracking format. They meet termly with senior leaders to review planning and track children's progress. They discuss children who are receiving or may require additional support with their learning. There is a need for senior leaders and staff to analyse the attainment of specific groups of children more fully.

## 2.2 Curriculum: Learning pathways

- Teachers use local authority learning pathways and commercial resources in a few curricular areas to plan learning for their children. Senior leaders should ensure the pathways in place for all curricular areas link to the experiences and outcomes and to National Benchmarks to support planning. Teachers should ensure they use all pathways appropriately to enable children to build on prior learning and support consistency across the school.
- Senior leaders and staff have introduced successfully a child-led, whole school approach to the planning and assessment of interdisciplinary learning. This is helping children to have more ownership of and choice in what and how they learn. Children enjoy choosing contexts for their interdisciplinary learning projects and talk positively about them. Teachers should continue to plan meaningful opportunities for and with children to engage, motivate and challenge them as they develop knowledge, understanding and skills.
- Staff prepare and manage key points of transition well as children progress through stages in school. All staff share relevant information pertaining to individual needs, attainment and wellbeing to ensure smooth transitions for all.
- The school has two established libraries within the school building. One library contains a range of books suitable for younger children or children of a lower reading age. The second library has a range of books suitable for children in the upper stages of their primary education. Children who use the library find the spaces well designed and helpful for them to relax and enjoy reading.
- Children enjoy and benefit from working with a range of partners who provide additional educational experiences during the school day. For example, the various partners who promote improved interactions between children, and increase the number of children who walk or cycle to school.
- Teachers have focused on the delivery of a progressive French curriculum across the school. Children talk positively about learning French.
- Staff make effective use of 'The Woodies' for a variety of purposes to take learning outdoors. Children are highly motivated by visiting this area for any aspect of their learning.
- In a few classes, children are not yet receiving their full entitlement to physical education. Senior leaders should ensure that all children receive their entitlement to two hours of quality physical education weekly.



## 2.7 Partnerships: Impact on learners – parental engagement

- Most parents believe that senior leaders lead and manage the school well. Staff make parents feel welcome and respect their views. Staff celebrate diversity across the school community. This supports new families to feel included in the school.
- Parents value the regular communication provided by the headteacher in the 'Friday Update'. This is providing them with a better understanding of the life of the school. Teachers provide parents with a regular curriculum learning leaflet. This leaflet, along with an online learning platform used at home, is improving parents' understanding of aspects of what their child is learning in school. A few parents would appreciate receiving more regular updates from the Parent Council.
- The school provides helpful presentations and information to parents about supporting their child's learning. The school should now track more fully parents' participation and engagement with events. This will assist the school in identifying parents who are unable to attend events or benefit from support the school is providing.
- A few parents are keen to be more involved in the work of the school. Senior leaders, as planned, should progress with plans to re-establish the use of parent volunteers across 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. At the time of the inspection, there were no identified areas for development.

### 3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion

satisfactory

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

- Children across the school are beginning to develop more fully their understanding of wellbeing and how this impacts on their lives. Across the school, all classes are beginning to explore the meaning of wellbeing indicators. Since this approach started, most children have explored the meaning of being safe, healthy, responsible and active. They use a range of approaches to consider the meaning of wellbeing indicators and how these relate to them. For example, children use personal reflection, discussion with other children and dictionary definitions. Although this whole school approach is in the early stages of delivery, the focus on one wellbeing indicator at a time is beginning to help children deepen their understanding of their wellbeing. It is now important for children to experience consistency in how teachers deliver wellbeing activities and be able to demonstrate progression with their learning of wellbeing.
- Children have benefited from a targeted programme helping them manage loss and change. The school has a few members of staff trained in this approach. This ensures that children receive timeous support when they face different challenges. Children who participated in the programme report that it has helped them cope through challenging periods of their life.
- Across the school year, all children provide responses to questionnaires that directly link to their wellbeing. Teachers monitor and track responses to build up an awareness of how to support children. Teachers and senior leaders have conversations with children when they identify an area of concern. This provides children with an opportunity to discuss their responses and for staff to provide timeous support. As a result, most children feel safe and well supported within the school. A few children do not always feel as safe when not in the classroom with a minority sharing that bullying is an area of concern for them. They have further concerns about disagreements leading to conflict during breaks. There is a need for the school to continue their focus on supporting children to build skills in finding solutions to any disagreement. This will help minimise disagreements leading to conflict.
- School staff have an appropriate understanding of their responsibilities and statutory duties related to wellbeing, equality and inclusion. School staff identify appropriately those children who require additional support. All children who require additional support interventions have individualised programmes and plans in place. Staff should continue to develop their approaches to individualised planning for children. In doing so, they should improve what the focus of the individual programme is, how they teach skills, and what measures will demonstrate that children are making progress. This will ensure that planned interventions consider the strengths of the child and identify ways staff can support children to build on these strengths.
- A few children require significant additional support to engage with learning or class activities. These children receive a high level of support within the school. This is resulting in positive patterns of attendance in school for these children. A few children would benefit from more

support to help them accelerate their learning or improve their wellbeing. Senior leaders should continue to review how they are meeting the needs of all identified children. This should include a review of children who may require more specialist support and those children who are developing their capacity to learn and engage more independently.

- Currently, there are no children with a coordinated support plan (CSP) attending the school. In a majority of child's planning meetings, senior leaders discuss with the multi-agency team whether children with an additional support need meet the criteria for a CSP. It is essential that the school now strengthen this practice to determine whether or not all children who potentially meet the criteria are considered for a CSP. There is a need to support parental understanding of what a CSP is so that they can become active participants in the decision-making process.
- The school has made a positive start to increasing the range of approaches to provide children with a nurturing and restorative school environment. As a result, almost all children respond positively to relationships developed with school staff. Most feel confident that they can approach staff, share their views and staff treat them with respect. Most children are able to reflect upon how they contribute to a positive class and school environment.
- Children learn about the importance of respecting difference in a variety of ways, including school celebrations and as part of the curriculum. Children as part of the whole school learning focus on 'Brilliant Broomhill' helped children be aware of their own uniqueness and celebrated diversity.
- The school tracks and monitors attendance for all children across the school. This is leading to appropriate levels of support and ensures good patterns of attendance are maintained for almost all children. It is important that senior leaders with support from the local authority ensure that all children, including those who have left the school, are able to access education.
- The local authority submitted self-evaluation information relating to compliance with the revised Nutritional Regulations 2020 and key duties, as required by The Schools (Health Promotion and Nutrition) (Scotland) Act 2007. The Health and Nutrition Inspector (HNI) discussed this information with relevant staff. Areas for development have been agreed with the school and the school meals provider.

### 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

#### Attainment in literacy and numeracy

- Across the school, most children are achieving expected levels of attainment in literacy and English, and numeracy and mathematics with a few children exceeding expected levels. Senior leaders should address the emerging attainment gap between those children on track and those not yet achieving the appropriate levels of achievement. Children with additional support needs are making satisfactory progress in their learning.
- Whole school attainment gathered over the last few years remains higher than that of local comparator schools.

#### Attainment in literacy and English

- At the early level and first level, most children are making satisfactory progress in literacy. At the second level children's progress is good.

#### Listening and talking

- Across the school, most children pay good attention to their teachers in whole class lessons. Most children are articulate and can communicate clearly and audibly with others.
- At early level, the majority of children listen well to their teacher and peers. A few children require support to take turns in group and class discussions. At first and second level, children build on the opinions and views of others during pair and group work. They confidently discuss the skills required to talk to an audience or debate a topic in class.

#### Reading

- Across the school, children speak enthusiastically about the range of books they can read. Staff should continue to build on the recent improvements to the school libraries and provide children with books to take home. Staff have taken positive steps to value and promote the role of home language for children who have English as an additional language through bilingual books.
- At early level, most children recognise familiar single sounds. They make good use of their understanding of phonics to support their decoding of new words. A few children are capable of acquiring new phonics and words at a quicker pace. At first level, most children read fluently. They can summarise the main points and predict the meaning of new words using clues in the text. At second level, most children develop well their comprehension skills and understanding of new vocabulary through group reading. They can articulate the reading skills they are developing and can express a preference for different authors. A few children at first level are capable of reading more challenging texts.

## Writing

- Staff have introduced new approaches to the teaching of writing. This is motivating children and helping them to improve the structure and content of their writing within a range of genres. Across the school there is an overall need to improve spelling, punctuation, and presentation of written work.
- Children at early level are learning how to form letters correctly. They are exploring the purpose of writing and making attempts to copy or write words independently. A few children are able to link their understanding of sounds to write simple words. At the early level, more needs done to support children to write independently. At first and second level, the majority of children write well across a range of genres. For example, older children wrote balanced arguments on the use of social media. They use vocabulary to engage the reader and organise their writing using paragraphs. Children at first level would benefit from having more frequent opportunities to develop their writing skills at a level appropriate to their ability.

## Numeracy and mathematics

- Attainment in numeracy and mathematics is satisfactory and most children are achieving appropriate levels of attainment across the school. A few children across the school could be making better progress.

## Number, money and measure

- At early level, most children can sequence numbers to 20 and identify the number before and after within 20. A few children can work with numbers beyond 20. Most children can add numbers within 10 using concrete materials and a few children can subtract within 10. At first level, most can round numbers to the nearest 10 and 100. Most children can use their mental strategies to add up to three digit numbers together although they would benefit from further practice of using strategies to subtract. Most children can use coins and notes confidently to add and calculate change accurately. They can read 12-hour time but would benefit from revisiting times beyond o'clock, half past, quarter to and quarter past.
- Children predicted to attain second level can round numbers up to one million to the nearest 100,000, 10,000 and 1000. Almost all display a strong grasp of place value including decimal notation. Almost all have a strong grasp of strategies to support their mental agility. All displayed a strong knowledge of the link between fractions, percentages and decimals. Almost all can confidently calculate profit and loss. All children at second level can estimate the length of a journey using distance, speed and time.

## Shape, position and movement

- At early level, almost all children use materials to make patterns. Most can sort and match simple two-dimensional shapes. Children at first level would benefit from revisiting the key features of some two-dimensional shapes and three-dimensional objects. Most can calculate the area of a given shape. At second level, almost all can confidently draw nets of shapes and describe the key properties of most two-dimensional shapes and three-dimensional objects. They can identify key features of a circle such as circumference, radius and diameter and confidently use mathematical language to describe different types of angles.

## Information handling

- Children at first level can collect data and present this in a graph, identifying the key features of graphs. At second level, children can confidently use mathematical language to explain the best way to gather and share data for a specific set of information. The use of digital technology would support these children to develop further their learning of data handling.

## Attainment over time

- Senior leaders and teachers gather and track data about children's progress and attainment across all curricular areas. Current systems do not yet provide attainment information over time to track literacy and English and numeracy and maths for individual children and cohorts easily. Senior leaders and staff need to review their systems to ensure they capture every learner's journey over time. This will allow them to more easily identify progress and any interventions required. In addition, this information will support the identification of the most appropriate priorities for improvement to raise attainment and achievement for all learners.
- Prior to the pandemic, whole school attainment data of CfE levels identified an upward pattern for literacy and English and numeracy and mathematics. Since the pandemic, attainment in these areas and across early, first and second level has dipped with first level being the most significantly impacted.

## Overall quality of learner's achievements

- Children's achievements are valued and celebrated in a variety of ways such as, wall displays, assemblies, Pupil of the Week, recognition boards, 'Brilliant Broomhillers' recognition and house points. Children are proud of their achievements. They are beginning to develop leaderships skills as part of their participation in school improvement groups. Senior leaders helpfully track children's personal achievements both in and out of school as well as involvement in the 'Broomhill Buzz' pupil voice groups. Senior leaders use this data to identify children who are at risk of missing out. Staff and volunteers are running an increasing number of extra curricular clubs which is helpfully providing more opportunities for children to enjoy success. Staff should now support children to understand the skills they are developing through these achievements. This will enable children to better understand how their achievements are supporting them to develop as learners. It will also celebrate how these achievements can impact positively on their school and wider community, helping to develop their skills for learning, life and work.

## Equity for all learners

- There is an increased gap in attainment between the children who are on track and those children who are not on track. Senior leaders and teachers should collectively develop a strategy to target and narrow this gap ensuring progress is accelerated for all children.
- Senior leaders and staff are aware of the social and economic context of their school community and they receive a small amount of additional funding based on this context. Senior leaders have used this funding to provide support through drama, writing and developing social skills to support relationships. Most children who meet the criteria associated with this funding are included in this support. Senior leaders have identified correctly the need to evaluate more closely all planned interventions to measure the impact on attainment for the most disadvantaged children.
- Senior leaders are committed to minimising the cost of the school day to ensure equity for all. For example, they ensure all pupils can access school uniform, outdoor clothing and PE kit. Staff plan experiences taking account of guidance relating to the cost of the school day to ensure the participation of all. Senior leaders are working with partners to teach all older children to ride a bike. A few children have also been able to borrow bikes to practise new skills at home.

## 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.