Summarised inspection findings

Heriot Primary School and Early Learning Childcare Class

Renfrewshire Council

21 January 2020

Key contextual information

Heriot Primary School and Early Learning Childcare Class is a non-denominational school situated in the town of Paisley. Currently the school has a roll of 260 children across 11 classes and an Early Learning Childcare Class with 27 children.

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	

■ Leadership of change is a major strength. The headteacher provides highly effective and supportive leadership across the school community. She has a strong commitment to ensuring continuous improvement and improving outcomes for children and their families. The headteacher is supported well by the depute headteacher. Staff across the school value a high level of professional trust. They speak highly of the encouragement and support they receive from the senior leadership team. They are empowered to influence and lead change in the school.

■ Children, staff and parents have a sound understanding of the school values and use them effectively in their day-to-day practice. Well-planned partnership working supports parents and children to identify the school's values. The values of family, honesty, respect and kindness underpin the life and work of the school. The shared understanding of these values provides a strong foundation for all future developments.

■ All staff have a strong understanding of the school's social, economic and cultural context. They use this skilfully to inform their practice. The headteacher and staff engage successfully with a wide range of partners. Their effective partnership working is leading to improved wellbeing for children and families. Additional staff are employed effectively using Pupil Equity Funding (PEF). Children and families benefit significantly from the targeted intervention they provide.

■ The headteacher actively promotes and facilitates professional learning and leadership at all levels. She leads the school's strong culture of continuous improvement. The strategic approach to professional learning and development supports a shared understanding of the appropriate pace of change. All staff are valued members of the school community. They are highly motivated and value the opportunities they have to lead aspects of school improvement. They are supportive of one another, enthusiastic and proud to be associated with the school.

■ All staff benefit from a supportive professional review and development (PRD) process. Targets are linked to personal development needs and priorities identified in the school improvement plan (SIP). All staff are actively encouraged to consider their career progression as part of the PRD process. Senior leaders support this effectively through the local authority 'Aspiring Principal Teacher' programme and other professional learning and leadership. A few staff have benefited from professional learning at national and international level. All classroom

assistants have undertaken professional learning in literacy and numeracy linked to the University of Strathclyde. A majority of teachers are undertaking post graduate study. All staff systematically share their professional learning to ensure it leads to improvements across the school. Together, the strong approaches to PRD and extensive professional learning ensure the school's approaches take account of the latest national and international research and practice. The greatest impact is in the development of children's wellbeing and approaches to numeracy and mathematics.

- The headteacher actively seeks opportunities to share practice at local and national level. Classroom assistants recently shared the impact of their university learning on literacy, numeracy and mathematics at the Scottish Learning Festival. Teachers who engaged in international training on numeracy and mathematics shared their learning at the regional improvement collaborative conference.

- The headteacher and teachers have very effective systems for strategic planning for improvement. Staff have successfully reduced bureaucracy in planning. This has increased time for planning, quality professional dialogue and improvement. The current SIP sets out clear priorities which reflect clearly local and national initiatives and reflect the context of the school. The headteacher and staff evaluate the effectiveness of initiatives alongside the context of the school, existing practice and potential impact of change. Improvement priorities are clearly linked to the needs of the school and the community. Almost all staff make valued contributions to leading improvements across the school.

- A structured and well-planned quality assurance programme provides regular, formal opportunities for teacher and senior leaders to discuss approaches to learning and teaching. Commendably, the headteacher has taken steps to involve children in this through the introduction of 'Learning Champions' in P5, P6 and P7. They are at the early stages of using How good is OUR school? to support their work. Teachers value the contribution this group will make to further improving learning and teaching across the school.

- Most children across the school are included in a committee. All committees have developed clear action plans outlining the work they will do and how they will evaluate their progress. Almost all children talk confidently about the work of these committees and the positive impact they have. Children across the school have opportunities to share their views through 'Have Your Say' questionnaires and 'Big Think' days.

- The headteacher seeks the views of parents on a range of areas. Recent consultation has supported the creation of a new anti-bullying policy and informed approaches to homework across the school. Parents would welcome further opportunities to contribute to school improvement and the wider life of the school.

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

- Children benefit from a supportive and nurturing learning environment. Their relationships with staff and one another are positive and respectful. Children benefit from strong collegiate working amongst staff. They are committed to continuously improving learning, teaching and assessment.

- Children engage meaningfully with the recently revised school values. Almost all children demonstrate these in the everyday life of the school. The values support promotion of successful learning and implementation of the 'Heriot learner toolkit'. Children across the school contributed to the creation of this toolkit of key skills and attributes. Teachers and children are well placed to use this to continue to improve learning and teaching.

- Almost all children are keen and eager to learn. They engage well in learning tasks and are interested in their learning. Children are developing a positive mindset, with a particular whole school focus on numeracy and mathematics. They talk positively about using strategies to overcome difficulties in their learning. The strong focus on increasing children's resilience and confidence is improving children's self-esteem as learners and supports them to increasingly embrace challenge.

- Children across the school, regularly work well together in pairs and groups. Almost all children respect the views and opinions of others. Children take increasing responsibility for their learning and are becoming more independent in group tasks. Teachers should continue to focus on what successful outcomes are for children when working in small groups.

- In almost all lessons, learning is well-planned and organised. Classroom assistants support children effectively. Teachers' explanations and instructions are clear. In most lessons, learning activities match the needs of most children and differentiation is planned for and evident during learning. Staff should continue to share practice on planning for differentiation in order to improve consistency in meeting the needs of all children, including those requiring further challenge. They should monitor the balance between teacher direction and pupil activity to further improve the pace of learning.

- In most lessons, teachers support children's understanding through the use of effective questioning. Teachers are continuing to develop children's thinking through the skilled use of open-ended questions. In most lessons children are clear about the purpose of their learning. They receive helpful verbal feedback and respond well to this. Children across all stages are encouraged to self- and peer- assess. All children set targets in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. Teachers are making a positive start to creating opportunities for children to set targets for learning across all areas of the curriculum. Plans to engage children in more regular discussion and review of their targets will support children to better understand themselves as learners, and articulate their strengths and what they need to do to improve.

■ Across the school children lead, plan and influence aspects of learning. 'Learning champions' make meaningful contributions to evaluating learning across the school. Older children value the opportunities they have to lead younger children as digital leaders, lunchtime club leaders and reading buddies. The 'vertical learning project' allows older children to support younger children with their social and emotional wellbeing.

■ In almost all classes, children identify what they would like to learn and find out about within topics for learning. This informs teachers' planning and allows for personalisation and choice. As a result, children have increased ownership of their learning. The 'Heriot learner toolkit' is providing further meaningful opportunities for children to lead learning at class level.

■ Teachers engage in moderation with stage partners and cluster colleagues. All teachers plan assessment as an integral part of learning. Teachers use a range of assessment approaches in literacy and numeracy, including planned opportunities for children to apply their learning in new and unfamiliar contexts. Plans are in place to extend the use of National Benchmarks across all curricular areas.

■ Effective approaches to tracking and monitoring progress have a clear focus on improving outcomes for children. All staff have a role in monitoring children's progress in learning. Effective weekly and termly monitoring of children's progress and pastoral information inform ongoing support and interventions. This robust approach supports children to make effective progress in their learning.

2.2 Curriculum: Learning pathways

■ Detailed progression pathways that take account of local authority guidance are in place for literacy and numeracy. They build on prior learning and ensure appropriate progress for all. Teachers have developed curriculum pathways for almost all curricular areas and should continue to develop these further. In taking this work forward, senior leaders and teachers should consider how the curriculum will ensure children receive their entitlement to progressive learning in career education in line with the Career Education Standard (CES) 3-18.

■ Children are developing a range of skills in digital technology. Teachers use progression pathways to develop digital skills through discrete learning and teaching. Children have learned new digital skills during visits to the local library. These include learning how to use a variety of devices as well as movie making skills. Digital leaders demonstrate new skills to younger children and help them become familiar with digital devices. The school should develop further its approaches to digital learning by increasing opportunities for children to use their skills regularly in class.

■ Children across the school experience learning a modern language. Senior leaders need to ensure all children experience the full entitlement to 1+2 modern language learning.

2.7 Partnerships: Impact on learners – parental engagement

■ The 'work home' programme, class learning assemblies and the weekly 'family finish' are increasingly engaging parents in their child's learning. Parents and children learn together at after school family learning sessions held throughout the session. Partners such as the Youth Music Initiative (YMI) and Adult Literacy, support a wide range of activities on offer. A few parents who have attended family learning events have gone on to engage with community learning programmes.

■ Almost all parents feel they receive regular and helpful information on how their child is learning and developing. Staff and partners deliver a range of events to help parents support their child's learning. An increasing number of parents attend these events, with feedback indicating positive benefits for parents and children.

■ The school increasingly uses digital technologies to engage parents in the life and work of the school. A range of videos on the school website provide information on how parents can support their child's learning at home.

■ A few parents have expressed an interest in re-establishing a Parent Council. Senior leaders, along with parents, should take this important development forward.

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 staff are dedicated to ensuring the wellbeing of children and their families is a central focus of their work. The school has a nurturing ethos. Almost all staff are aware of the needs and challenges faced by some children and families in their community. They respond quickly and sensitively to their needs. The strong focus on health and wellbeing is having a significant impact on improving outcomes for children. Effective partnership working supports this very well.

■ A shared understanding of the recently revised school values helps to ensure children across the school benefit from positive relationships with staff and one another. They articulate the school's values confidently and understand how they affect the life and work of the school. Children interact with each other and adults with respect and empathy. They use the school values to reflect on their behaviour and interactions together.

■ The school has a clear strategy for developing health and wellbeing. Staff are taking forward a number of priorities including improving aspects of physical, mental and emotional health and promoting physical exercise and aspects of health and nutrition. All staff have been involved in professional learning on nurturing principles, resilience and de-escalation techniques. This is leading to a shared understanding of the importance of wellbeing and its impact on learning and achievement.

■ Almost all children are developing their understanding of their own wellbeing using wellbeing indicators. Children use wellbeing indicators to reflect on their progress using 'What I Think' questionnaires. A recently introduced health and wellbeing programme, with a focus on emotional and mental wellbeing, ensures children have regular opportunities to talk about the wellbeing indicators and how they feel both in and out of school.

■ Children took a lead role in auditing the playground to make it a safe place. As a result, there is a reduction in the number of disagreements in the playground. Children benefited from the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) Speak Out Stay Safe assembly. Following this, children in P6 and P7 participated in workshops to further support their understanding of keeping safe. Almost all children feel the school helps them to feel safe and almost all identify someone in school they can talk to if they are worried or upset.

■ The school has strong partnerships with an external agency to support children and families with mental and emotional wellbeing. Children talk confidently about accessing this support and articulate the positive impact this has had on themselves and their families. Teachers use the available support to develop their own skills in this area. This is leading to a more consistent approach and use of language across the school.

- Most children and the majority of parents feel the school deals with bullying well. Senior leaders and partners should continue to involve parents in the ongoing work on values, nurturing principles and anti-bullying ensuring there is a shared understanding of the school's policy and procedures.

- The main duties under the Schools (Health Promotion and Nutrition) (Scotland) Act 2007 are being met. These ensure there is access to free drinking water throughout the day, the school meal service is promoted to parents and children and there are suitable arrangements in place to ensure those entitled to a free school meal are not openly identified.

- The nutritional analysis based on the planned menu shows that all standards are being met. Further ongoing work is recommended to monitor actual choices selected against the planned menu analysis.

- Inclusion and equality is a strength of the school. The increasing range of interventions delivered by staff and partners is leading to improved outcomes for children. There is a strong focus on individual needs and wellbeing. Staff use an extensive range of approaches and interventions to overcome potential barriers to learning, participation and achievement.

- The school has highly effective procedures for identifying and supporting children who may require additional support, led very effectively by the senior leadership team. Senior leaders and teachers engage in weekly monitoring of all children's progress. They quickly identify barriers to learning and appropriate support is put in place. A staged intervention model ensures all children make the best possible progress. Teachers and support staff use children's plans effectively to identify and record targets for children identified as requiring additional support. Parents and children co-create and evaluate these plans.

- The progress of children receiving support is carefully tracked and monitored. Teachers record significant information to provide a clear picture of each child's needs. Data is used well to identify future interventions and support. Support for learning teachers and support assistants support individual children and small groups well in and out of class. This is leading to children who require additional support accessing their learning and making good progress. The school has used Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) to employ additional teachers and support assistants. They are deployed effectively to promote equity and work towards closing the school's attainment gap.

- Children's understanding of diversity, discrimination and protected characteristics is developing through the health and wellbeing programme and ongoing work on children's rights. Children are increasingly confident in articulating their rights. Teachers should continue to embed learning about children's rights and equality into the curriculum.

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

- Most children's attainment in literacy and English and numeracy and mathematics is good.

- As a result of increased collaboration with colleagues across stages and local cluster, data is becoming more robust. Staff are aware there remains scope for children across the school to achieve more across all levels. Senior leaders are improving approaches to analysing data which shows the value the school is making to children's attainment year on year.

- Most children who may have barriers to their learning are making appropriate progress. Attainment data provided by the school, indicates that good progress is being made to close the poverty-related attainment gap.

Attainment in literacy and English

- Overall, attainment in literacy and English is good.

Listening and talking

- Across the school most children are making good progress and attaining well in listening and talking. At early level, most children show empathy to one another and listen and respond to others appropriately. All children show enjoyment when listening to stories. At first level, most children listen well and respond appropriately in an adult-led discussion. At second level, most children show confidence in communicating clearly and audibly in a range of different contexts. Most children contribute relevant ideas to discussions and justify their opinions with confidence.

Reading

- The majority of children are making good progress in reading and, across the school, a few are exceeding national expectations. Staff should provide increased depth and challenge for those children whose progress exceeds national expectations. At early level, most children read aloud familiar texts with good awareness of simple punctuation. They enjoy discussing characters from stories they have read and are becoming more confident in summarising short texts. At first level, most children read aloud a familiar piece of text with appropriate fluency and understanding. They enjoy identifying favourite authors and explaining reasons for their preferences of genres. Most children understand and answer literal, inferential and evaluative questions. At second level, most children read fluently with expression linked to punctuation. Most are confident in talking in increasing detail about characters, setting and plot. There is currently a whole school focus on summarising and most children across the levels are developing this skill with confidence and enjoyment. Children now need to identify literary techniques and use this knowledge to improve their own writing.

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Writing

■ The majority of children are making expected progress in writing and a few are exceeding national expectations. Across the school, children are developing skills in planning and writing for a range of purposes.

■ At early level, most children form a meaningful sentence and punctuate appropriately. Most children are confident in using strategies to check spelling and apply their knowledge of phonics when attempting to spell new words. Children are not yet sufficiently skilled in creating texts of their choice. At first level, the majority of children use simple punctuation and common conjunctions to link sentences. They create texts for an increasing range of purposes and audiences, with recognisable features of genre. Children would benefit from increased opportunities to create a wider variety of texts by the end of first level. At second level, the majority of children write accurately in a range of genres. This includes writing about personal experiences, imaginative stories and poetry. The majority of children use paragraphs effectively to organise ideas and themes and use an increasing range of punctuation accurately. Standards of presentation in writing across the stages are consistently good. Staff should continue to work collaboratively to review standards with the aim that these are consistent across all stages.

Numeracy and mathematics

■ Overall, attainment in numeracy and mathematics is good. Across the school most children are making good progress. The school's approaches to developing a 'maths growth mindset' is impacting positively on children's ability and confidence to accurately tackle calculations mentally and in writing.

Number, money and measure

■ Across the school, most children have a good understanding of number and number processes. Most children carry out calculations accurately using a variety of strategies. Almost all children are confident in explaining the reason why they used a particular strategy. At early level, most children use coins confidently to pay for items to 10p. Children would benefit from further opportunities to develop money skills in a real life context. Most children at early level describe objects in the immediate environment using appropriate vocabulary for measuring length and weight. At first level, most children use correct notation for common fractions and demonstrate an understanding of equivalent fractions. Most children carry out multi-step word problems when calculating cost and giving change. They identify the correct unit of measure for different problem solving situations. At second level the majority of children have good knowledge of money and time. Children now need to develop an understanding of perimeter and area.

Shape, position and movement

■ At early level, most children use digital technologies confidently to record 2D shapes they identify in the classroom. Most children code simple robots to follow a set of movement instructions. At first level, almost all children recognise and name a right angle. At first and second level most children speak confidently about the properties and names of 2D shapes and 3D objects. Children at second level, now need to develop their understanding of the relationship between 3D objects and their nets.

Information handling

■ Almost all children at the early level, use their knowledge of colour, shape, size to match and sort items. Almost all children at early level, apply their number skills to answer simple questions based on data displayed pictorially. At first level, most children show awareness of the use of tally marks. They are less confident in describing how to use and display data they have gathered. At second level, most children carry out surveys in real life contexts. They use digital technology to record data accurately in a variety of bar graphs and simple pie charts.

Attainment over time

- The school has data on children's achievements of reading, writing, talking and listening, and numeracy and mathematics gathered during the past four years. The school is now taking steps to gather and monitor data for all curriculum areas to show the full scope of children's overall progress. Senior leaders have incorporated tracking and monitoring the other curricular areas into a new tracking and monitoring system that they plan to implement across the school later this session.

- Attainment over time in both literacy and numeracy is too variable. The school has maintained high levels of attainment in listening and talking. Across the school, between 2017 and 2018, attainment in reading increased. Attainment at second level for writing and numeracy improved between 2017 and 2019. Commendably, there are a number of regular planned opportunities for focused professional dialogue between teachers and senior leaders to interrogate information on individual children's progress.

Overall quality of learners` achievement

- Children value opportunities to take roles of responsibility through participation in the Pupil Council, Eco Committee, Sports Committee and as Learning Champions. Participation in these groups help them to develop confidence and become respected and responsible within the school and wider community. Children who are not part of these groups are confident their peers seek and share their views.

- Teachers are committed to engaging children in physical activity and sport. They recently gained a sportscotland Gold School Sport Award in recognition of their work in this area. A wide range of afterschool and lunchtime clubs is on offer. Senior leaders track and monitor participation to ensure all children are accessing the clubs and take action to overcome barriers to participation. An increasing number of children participate in community sporting events and clubs as a result of links the school has developed. Children are encouraged to lead lunchtime clubs. Almost all children agree the school offers them opportunities to take part in activities beyond the classroom and timetabled day.

Equity for all learners

- Staff across the school community know children and families very well. They understand the diverse socio-economic context of the local community. Senior leaders and staff are committed to promoting equity for all children.

- Targeted interventions in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing are being developed using well-planned Pupil Equity Funded resources. This is helping to reduce potential barriers to learning and provide support to those who need it. Senior leaders evaluate improvements in engagement for children supported through interventions to improve literacy and numeracy. There is particular emerging evidence of positive impact in numeracy and mathematics interventions across all stages. The whole school approach to 'maths mindset' is improving children's and staff's positivity to challenge and be challenged in numeracy and mathematics.

- The school ensures financial barriers to children's participation in school clubs, activities and trips are overcome. Families regularly use and contribute to a recently established school uniform recycling scheme.

- All staff have made a good start to developing a positive learning culture for whole school improvement. There is a very strong culture emerging within the school to implement improvement and change. The school evidences this through its focus on improving classroom practice with the local authority 'coaching and modelling' officer. Staff increasingly seek professional learning opportunities and senior leaders empower them to engage in professional learning within the school and with cluster colleagues. The school is now well-placed to plan professional learning opportunities with colleagues outwith the cluster and local authority to engage them in a wider, national perspective of school improvement. This includes working with cluster colleagues to support moderation across all stages of the school. Senior leaders prioritise time in a collegiate calendar through the working time agreement (WTA), for staff to engage in professional dialogue and share practice.

- Professional engagement and collegiate learning is developing very well at all levels throughout the school. Staff work effectively as a team and are seeking opportunities to be more involved in leadership opportunities linked to professional development aspirations and whole-school improvement priorities. Staff are encouraged to contribute by focussing on key aspects of improvement at school and cluster level. Staff routinely create time for professional dialogue, reading and discussion. Most staff apply findings from educational research to improve their learning and teaching and support and challenge each other's thinking and practice. This includes study and research at postgraduate level. Staff have engaged in a wide range of career-long professional learning over recent years. For example, 'maths mindset' and literacy, numeracy and moderation development work, as well as aspiring promoted post-holder courses provided by the local authority. Staff are beginning to work together more closely to feedback on how their professional learning impacts on school improvements and outcomes for children.

- Staff work very well collegiately across the primary stages and are keen to lead aspects of school improvement to develop key priorities for improvement and change. Staff engage well with colleagues in the cluster and take an active part in cluster developments. The school is developing a culture of looking outwards beyond the cluster and the local authority. Staff should seek opportunities to visit other schools and settings with a focus on sharing good practice and engaging with colleagues more widely to gain a more robust insight into applying national standards and guidance.

- As the school takes forward improvements, there needs to be a clear focus on improving targeted aspects of learning and teaching across the school to raise attainment and achievement. There are examples of highly effective practice across the school which staff should share more routinely to ensure all lessons across the school are of a consistently high quality.

- Children are very enthusiastic in adopting a range of leadership roles around classes and the wider life of the school. This includes roles such as digital leaders, being a member of the Eco Committee, and members of the Pupil Council. Children are confident in talking about school life and their role in school improvement. Children are increasingly involved in developments in learning and show an understanding of the school's values and improvement initiatives. Senior leaders and staff are aware that there is now scope for children to be more involved in making decisions about their learning and leading more aspects of learning at class

level. There is headroom for children to have increased opportunities to discuss their next steps across all curricular areas and to contribute to planning learning pathways which meet all of their needs and develop their interests and skills.

Practice worth sharing more widely

- The way in which the headteacher and staff are empowered. They have a clear focus on improving outcomes for children at Heriot Primary and take very good account of the needs of their community when implementing change. The pace of change is very well managed by all.

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.